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STATE OF THE MASSES

Emil Lederer

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EMIL LEDERER

STATE
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MASSES

THE THREAT OF THE CLASSLESS SOCIETY



W. W. Norton & Company, Publishers

NEW YORK 1940

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STATE OF THE MASSES

The Threat of the Classless Society

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FOREWORD

The author of this book regarded the present war as inevitable from the very moment the Nazis assumed power. He expected the ruthlessness of the Nazi regime to increase in proportion as the boundaries of the Reich were extended. Many liberal-minded people failed to share this opinion as late as the summer of 1939. Today it has become an assertion which the same people hasten to call a truism.

Long before its inception the author defined the aims of the present European war. He held that it would not be another war to restore safety to democracy. "The coming struggle," he wrote, "will be a fight for society and privacy." This opinion derives from the original and challenging theory of modern dictatorships which is put forth in this book, for the book's central thesis is that fascism is an effort to melt society down to a crowd.

Crowds have often played a part in history, especially in revolutions, but their role used to be a transitory one. As abruptly as they emerged from the groups and interstices of society for moments of trans-

port and destructiveness, they dissolved and flowed back into groups. It is in groups that social life finds its normal and ordinary expression, whereas crowds are antisocial.

The modern dictatorial state, the state of the masses or crowds, has no tradition and cannot refer to precedents. Born out of social turmoil and intellectual irresponsibility, it represents a paradoxical effort to perpetuate the hour of its birth: it institutionalizes crowds, which live by crushing institutions. To the author of this book the mass-state is an historically unique phenomenon. In its shadow the differences between the various stages of capitalism, or the distinctions between nondictatorial governments, lose their significance. For all social and political systems existing before the rise of the mass-state were phases of western civilization; in contemporary dictatorships the author sees a disruption of history because spontaneity and reason in society are displaced by mass-emotions and terror.

This assertion should not be understood as an addition to the series of slogans which liberals and socialists hurl back at the fascist claims of demi-eternity for their rule. The reply to the fascist creed can indeed not be a creed with reversed content. It must come from sober judgment. In the words of the author, "the emergence of the mass-state . . . makes necessary the revision of all our thinking on society, evolution, revolution and transformation of the economic

system." With an intrepid mind he revised in this book many of his ideas on society.

To him, as a socialist who was deeply influenced by Marxian sociology, this meant above all a reconsideration of the supreme Marxian "myth," the ideal of a classless society. Once in this essay he indulgently calls it an idyl, merely adding that idyls are tedious to live in. Turning to reality he stresses the fatal fact that it is the masses which are classless—amorphous. Thus, as a socialist and a valiant antifascist, the author discovers the social value of classes and differentiation into group life.

The author's view involves a social theory of freedom which differs radically from that of Marx. According to Marx, history is a continuous class struggle in which man is caught in the exigencies of the economic system and exposed to the sway of force; freedom and reason are sweepingly relegated to the classless society of the future. It is indeed a hopeless endeavor to understand modern dictatorships in terms of this scheme. Any theory which, in contemplating the world of today, does not distinguish between the social consequences of government by law and the social consequences of domination by organized terror and planned emotions, is not worth the minute it takes to refute it.

Marx lived in the nineteenth century, which, for all its capitalistic exploitation, was peaceful and decent in comparison with ours. Marx lacked the experience of

scientifically organized terror. Even the Prussian state, which Marx did know and which left such a deep imprint on his philosophy, appears today as an idyl of freedom and reason. Despite all this he thought that the decisive moment in the history of mankind would be the day when the capitalistic system would be overthrown, when force would cease to harass man and reason would reign. While it was plausible in the nineteenth century to denounce economic exploitation as the worst form of force, we are learning again that the worst form of force is political persecution.

If we must find turning points in history the author of this book gives the competent advice that we seek them not in the future but in the present: he studied not only Marx and the history of capitalism after Marx but also the political events in his and our life. Freedom and reason, therefore, denote in this essay not indistinct traits of man's indistinct future but concrete prefascist experiences. In democracy even class conflicts are manifestations of freedom, for social peace does not mean the absence of struggle. Freedom resides in the structure of society as long as society is composed of groups. In groups man pursues his interests, and in groups he shapes his life. Since society is composed of many groups it is pluralistic in nature and necessarily involves a division of social power. Social life, then, is regarded as a restriction of political sovereignty, and the supreme function of society consists in its being a safeguard of individual rights: the

division of social power is the basic guarantee of freedom. Each group, whether spontaneously organized like a trade union or organically grown out of tradition like the churches, testifies to the social efficacy of freedom, for each compromise between conflicting interests derives from man's ability to reason.

Clearly the author's appraisal of the conditions of freedom is of liberal extraction. He does not, however, approach the problem of social order with the postulate of a pre-established social harmony or with a belief in the untainted rationality of man. He conceives of social order as the outcome of the checks and balances which are established by the very coexistence of many groups. This alone, to be sure, would be a precarious foundation of order, inadequate whenever the distribution of power definitely favored some groups at the expense of others; there would then be, at best, order without justice. Fortunately, however, in modern society the social power of labor, the weakest class at the beginning of capitalism, has increased with the increasing wealth of society, and capital as well as labor is beginning to learn that its well-being depends on constructive governmental action in the field of economic policy. In addition, the checks and balances are understood as an institutional inducement to observe certain common rules in the pursuit of individual, partisan interests. The observance of these rules is indicative of man's effective control of his emotions, a tribute to his ability to build a civilization.

Crowds "feel" totalitarian, denying the right of existence to anything social outside themselves. Their unity, which springs from emotion, has no structure and precludes reasoning. The mass-state, built upon the eradication of groups, replaces reason by propaganda and enslaves man by delivering him to his emotions.

It may be objected that the term "group" is defined in this book too comprehensively, effacing the conventional distinctions between groups, classes and institutions. On the other hand, the concept may be regarded as too narrow, since it does not permit the order of tyrannically controlled societies to be recognized as a structure of groups. Either objection, though both are formally valid, would miss the intention of the author, who was primarily interested in the relationship between society and the modern state. Once society is understood as the organized structure of spontaneous and traditional interests, it is consistent to exclude from the term "group" any organizations which serve to suppress spontaneity and disrupt tradition.

The most serious question raised in this brilliant essay concerns the nature of political sovereignty and its possible reconciliation with personal liberty under historic conditions which enable and compel governments to steer the economic process. By his example the author encourages us to reconsider this problem in the light of recent political events, without prejudice

or undue concern for the vested interests of capital or of labor. His own philosophy of liberal socialism, developed from a critical appraisal of contemporary politics and ultimately based upon his unshaken trust in reason, owes less to the perverted Prussianism of Marx than to his last six years of American experience, which in this book are assimilated to his European past.

This book was written after Czechoslovakia had been wiped off the map of Europe but before the German army and secret police invaded Poland. The recent events in Europe bear testimony to the political acumen of the author, who never believed in the possibility of appeasing Hitler.

Appendices I and II were originally included in the text of Chapter I, and Appendices III to VI constituted the second chapter of the original manuscript. The editorial change has been made, with some reluctance, in order to throw into relief the essential nature of the book as an essay in politics.

The manuscript contained subtitles only for Chapter I, and section divisions only for what is now Chapter II. The subtitles in Chapters II to VI and a few, especially marked footnotes, have been inserted by the editor.

Since the manuscript was written in English by a European not yet entirely adjusted to the demands of the language, a smoother style seemed desirable in

fairness to the author and for the convenience of his readers. This set an exacting task, which was performed by Virginia Todd Venneman with subtlety, understanding and conscientious restraint.

Apart from the changes that have been indicated, the book remains in the form in which Emil Lederer finished it, a week before his death.

HANS SPEIER

INTRODUCTION

Modern dictatorship is not the last ditch of defense in which capitalism has entrenched itself to postpone the day of its doom; nor is it the rule of a single man by violence; nor the revolt of the middle classes against their decline; nor of the younger generation against the older. It is not the tyranny of the armed part of the population over the unarmed, peaceful majority; nor the ascendancy of the untalented who have wrested power from the talented; nor the revival of old barbaric instincts which will destroy civilization. All these formulas contribute somehow to the explanation of the phenomenon of modern dictatorship, especially by unveiling the psychology of those who have helped and are helping to establish the dictatorship—and of those who analyze them—but they do not explain its sociological nature.

What then is modern dictatorship? It is a modern political system which rests on the amorphous masses. The masses form the substance of a movement in and through which they become institutionalized, and as institutionalized masses they sweep the dictator into power and keep him in power. Unless he can fall back on these institutionalized masses, he is threatened by social forces. Dictatorship, therefore, is bound to destroy society: society has always been a stratified structure with different interests and ideas. This period of dictatorships is a new epoch in history in which all the potentialities of a destructive mass-movement are turned into a political system. Unless the countries which are still free realize that they must defend their civilization against a movement aiming at their enslavement by themselves, the threat of dictatorship is very real.

Since dictatorship is a tyranny based on institutionalized masses, while independent, spontaneous social forces are destroyed, it is bound to follow a course which is as unknown and unexpected as the mass-state itself. The first stage is the coalescence

of masses into a solid block, by means of modern technique, and the establishment of a permanent regime. But there will always be the danger that interests as well as ideas may reassert themselves. Social stratification will tend to reappear, and as stratification implies differentiation of opinion and arguments, the emotional basis of a dictatorship is never stable. It is a regime based on the enthusiasm of amorphous masses; it is inimical to reason and destructive of civilization; it is bound to pitch emotions high. If the original passions fade out, new ones must be substituted. Apparently we are now in this second stage of the dictatorial state. The substitutes seem to be the mobilization of the lowest instincts, glorification of power and force as values in themselves, not only as means to win the day. These ideas are translated into foreign policy, and thus the emotions are canalized and diverted against the "enemy." At the same time this policy serves to build up a gigantic bureaucratic organization which leaves no leeway for any private action, which keeps down under an iron heel even the most harmless economic and cultural

interests, and which has at its disposal and is ready to use the most elaborate machinery of terrorism.

In spite of this transformation the dictatorial state tends to remain a mass-state and to fall back upon the mobilization of the amorphous masses, wherever that is necessary. Nobody can yet tell where this discrepancy between its original nature and its present character will lead. But it is obvious that such a state remains dynamic, that its very existence is dynamite to the other states. They are not only threatened from the outside, but feel that their very structure is exposed to attacks directed against their nature and their history. We witness the collision not only of ideas but of various ways of life. The theme of the present essay is to draw attention to the essential nature of the modern mass-state, which as long as it exists cannot tolerate the survival of "old-fashioned civilization."

STATE OF THE MASSES

The Threat of the Classless Society

Chapter One

MASSES AND SOCIAL GROUPS

SOCIAL GROUPS

I shall call social groups parts of the population which are united by the same interest, economic or otherwise. Their coexistence makes society, whatever the range and the real weight of the state may be. Such groups will be centers of power. This power will depend on the importance of their function and to what extent they can control the whole community or prevent decisions against their interests. The power may continue for a longer or a shorter period, even if the function dwindles away.

Social groups are homogeneous; they are united by an ideology which centers around their function. The

estates during the Middle Ages and class organizations in modern times are examples. Social groups with cultural aims should also be mentioned; they may acquire political weight in certain epochs, as in the period of awakening of some European nations.

The varieties of social groups in modern times are endless. There are economic groups, some strictly organized, as employers' and workers' unions; traditional groups, as high and petty bourgeoisie, or the nobility—corresponding to economic groups, but not identical with them; and cultural groups. Schools can also be considered as social groups, especially in Anglo-Saxon countries where schools are corporations and maintain a connection with their alumni. Scientific schools may be mentioned, as well as sports organizations. Religious groups are also genuine social groups, frequently with a significance beyond merely religious concerns.

Modern society is split up into innumerable groups, and an individual belongs to several of them. Usually he will avoid belonging to groups with conflicting interests. The life and development of modern society depend upon the existence of all these groups, the relative importance of which is different in different countries. Whereas, for instance, the schools and educational institutions play a very great role in England and in the United States, the economic groups were of decisive importance and influence in pre-Hitler Germany.

Political parties as social groups need special consideration. Although they try to appeal to the whole community, they will never organize more than a part. Whereas the economic and cultural groups tend toward a horizontal stratification, the political parties form a vertical stratification: they unite members of various groups. Each of them aims at the organization of the whole population but is restricted in its expansion by other parties. Usually parties alternate in power: inasmuch as no government is successful forever and is exposed to the criticism of the opposition, the government of one party is bound to be replaced sooner or later by the government of another party. And still the ideology of a party aims always at appealing to the whole population. But it will not, in principle, deny the possibility of error. It will submit to the test of experience and of success, and accept defeat in politics, because other parties must also accept it. Therefore, although every party maintains that it acts and governs in the interest of the whole population, it is implied in the party system that there are several groups competing for power. And argument is an indispensable part of political activities, even aside from its emotional appeal.

Even under an absolute system, or under a government maintained in power by traditional forces such as the army and the bureaucracy, the stratification of society still exists and the social groups exert their power by their organizations, their influence on pub-

lic opinion. In Germany, Austria and Hungary, for instance, and even in Russia, some shifts in power were noticeable during the nineteenth century in spite of the overwhelming power of the dynasties. There has hardly been a time in history during which shifts within the groups have not led to changes in power though nominally nothing had changed. It is this grouping and regrouping which is the outward expression of society, which is indicative of its life. All the great revolutions but the bolshevist have been the eruption of a large group or class which seized power in the name of the whole community, but as a distinct group different from other groups. The right of these other groups to exist was not denied, nor were they ever destroyed.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF GROUPS

The psychology of an individual may serve as the starting point for a consideration of the psychology of groups. The individual even in isolation is never merely rational. His acting, working or thinking requires energy: energy means will, and any volition implies some conviction which roots in what we call the irrational. And the irrational in which we believe, our values, cannot be separated from our emotions.

The field of our reasoning is very narrow; sooner or later we reach a point from which we can penetrate no further. If we think of the universe we are

faced by antinomies, such as the finity or infinity of space. If we think of justice or of the state, we very quickly reach the point at which our thinking is blocked, or our statements cannot be proved on rational grounds. We must make mental decisions as we must make decisions in our everyday actions. The history of our thinking is an heroic and not entirely unsuccessful attempt to enlarge the field within which we can reason; but it is a restricted field in spite of all our exertions. We may even say that our reasoning has its roots in the irrational—from where else could it derive the power to renew its attempts after every failure, or the conviction of its value? But in spite of these limitations on our thinking and in spite of its irrational roots, it is the basis of human existence in society. It is the light which makes social action visible, the border line that separates human society from a tribal state. Thus we can continue to think and to live as thinking beings only if we recognize that our existence is a texture in which the strands of emotions and of reason are interwoven. Every individual is an emotional as well as a reasoning being. If his emotions are unrestricted, he will be taken to task by others with whose interests his aims conflict. Unless there is to be only struggle, some authority must set up rules of conduct or behavior and the individual must argue in order to win his point. Thus society enforces reasoning upon everyone, however emotional he may be.

In the psychology of groups a similar mixture of

reason and emotion must be recognized. The smaller the group the easier it is to interpret it as consisting of individuals. Then the reasoning within the group will be predominant; but even then there will always be something additional, a superadditum to the psychology of the individual members as it would exist outside the group: the thinking, the reasoning of the individual within the group will be enriched. He will defend his views with greater energy, as that is inherent in any discussion between individuals. This superadditum stems from the fact that every group rests also on an emotional basis, the more so the larger the group. Representing a certain idea or interest, and confronted with other opposing groups, the arguments used by any group are accompanied by an appeal to the emotions of its own members as well as to those of the public.

This is felt by each member in a group: in making a point he will give way to irrational appeal, although as an individual he would try to control himself. There will always be some common basis for all the members of the social group; as the main interests of the individuals will frequently be identical, there will be no obstacle to emotional energies nor any reason against them. If there is discussion in large groups, each speaker will feel backed by a group within the group, and he will conjure the common interest which unites the whole although there are differences in details. Individuals, accustomed to controlling

themselves in their own affairs, will feel relieved that they can give way to an emotional appeal, which in most people is inherent even in their most rational reasoning.

The larger the social group the more its aims are apt to bear on the interests and affairs of the whole community. Questions of general interest lend themselves to emotional expression, as they are on the border of reasoning. But inasmuch as there are always other bases for answers to these questions, arguments are necessarily resorted to. Therefore, as long as the community is stratified, emotions will be restricted and balanced by arguments, without regard to the political system under which the community lives.¹

MULTITUDES

I shall call multitudes great numbers of people which are in no respect psychologically homogeneous. Thus multitudes consist of individuals who belong to different groups and who do not form a group in themselves. They may be indifferent to any point of view or to any interest; they are just human atoms massed together. If they are faced by the same unexpected situation, as, for instance, a shower of rain, they will

¹ Graham Wallas was, as far as I know, one of the first to discover—after a period of sheer rationalism—that “human nature,” i.e., the irrational, cannot be suppressed in politics; that, on the contrary, it is very frequently, when we least expect it, the decisive element in the situation.

behave in the same way: open their umbrellas or look for shelter. But such multitudes or great numbers are not a social phenomenon, inasmuch as the individuals merely exist in the same space without being interrelated to one another. Although everyone in a multitude may be impressed by the great number of people crowded together, there is between them no interrelation. The impression made by a multitude is of the same psychological nature as the impression made on the human mind by the vastness of the sea or the majesty of the mountains. It has been noted, not without justification, that nowhere can one feel as lonely as within multitudes of unknown people. There is nothing more that need be said about multitudes—everything else that has been said on the subject refers to what we shall call a crowd or masses.

MASSES OR CROWDS

I understand by a mass or a crowd a great number of people who are inwardly united so that they feel and may possibly act as a unity. Even if they do not act, they feel inclined to action; they cannot bear remaining passive if they are together as a crowd for a long time. For action, however, can be substituted an expression of emotions, for instance in listening to a speech or to music. Such substitutes can give the illusion of action. [The individuals in a mass belong to different social groups, but that does not matter: they

are not aware of it as long as they form a part of the mass. Masses are therefore amorphous; social stratification is effaced or at least blurred. The point of unity for the individuals comprising a mass is always emotional. A crowd can be united only by emotions, never by reason: reason would be lost on the masses, as is well established psychologically.]

This psychological unity constitutes the difference between multitudes and masses. A multitude, however, can easily become a crowd; it needs only an incident which acts upon it by suggesting or stimulating an emotion. Whether a multitude will become a crowd depends on the circumstances. That a multitude can easily become a crowd must not obscure the fact that its members must be susceptible to the same emotions, which presupposes, for instance, that they speak the same language and share a common historical experience. Large numbers of people belonging to different nations and races are not likely to coalesce into what we call a crowd. [The existence of a common cultural basis is very important.]

The difference between the crowd and the *Bund*¹

¹ *Bund*, usually translated as "communion," was introduced into sociology as a technical term in 1922 by the German philosopher Herman Schmalenbach. He proposed to distinguish "communion" from "community" (*Gemeinschaft*) and "society" (*Gesellschaft*) as a third fundamental type of social group. A "community," like a neighborhood or a clan, is not designed by its members: it grows out of tradition and custom. A "society," such as a trade union or a confederation, is founded on the deliberation, agreement and compromise of its members, its rationale being utility. The bonds

is threefold: the crowd is a casual aggregation of people, and everyone has access to it; it is open. The *Bund* aims at permanence and has a closed membership. Furthermore, the *Bund* is united by a leader, its unity founded in his personality; it is based on a very specific personal relation between the members and the leader, and rarely survives him. Although it is frequently merely emotional, its members usually emphasize that a *Bund* is the opposite of a crowd. The modern development of crowds proves how unwarranted this claim is: they tend to develop into *Bünde*.

To say that a great number of people can become a crowd does not mean that everyone physically caught in the crowd is part of it. If an individual detests being a part of the crowd, abhors the emotions which carry the crowd away, he will remain an individual, though he may be cautious enough not to show it. This may help us understand what the crowd is, psychologically. It is, to be sure, composed of individuals—but of individuals who cease to be isolated, who cease thinking. The isolated individual within the crowd cannot help thinking, criticizing the emotions. The others, on the other hand, cease to think:

of a "communion" are feelings of love or enthusiasm, shared by all members and strong enough to shape the whole life of each member of the group. Youth especially is disposed to form communions. Examples of this type of group are religious sects in the early stage of their development, friendships, fraternal orders, certain military or political fellowships, etc. When their original spontaneity fades they dissolve or develop into groups of the society- or community-type.—Ed.

they are moved, they are carried away, they are elated; they feel united with their fellow members in the crowd, released from all inhibitions; they are changed and feel no connection with their former state of mind. Psychological descriptions of this phenomenon by individuals who have experienced it concur in this respect: they say they were "carried away"; that they only felt; that it is similar to intoxication. Some feel ashamed afterwards; they "cannot understand themselves." In short, emotion got hold of them to a degree which is unusual with "normal people." But it resembles the excitement of passionate people; everyone within the crowd behaves like an Othello, and is filled with the elation which emotional action gives; no one is, in Shakespeare's words, "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

That a crowd is emotional is generally accepted; it is likewise accepted that a crowd cannot reason. The most likely explanation for this is that the crowd is socially amorphous: there is no common level nor framework of reference which allows analytical treatment of the situation. But beyond that, everyone has within himself a psychological realm of emotional potentialities which can be appealed to: love, the nation, the country, race. No one is altogether free of these emotions. The crowd can unleash them and then do away with all the inhibitions created by education, social standards, customs. If the crowd is faced with

a situation which appeals to common emotions and which calls for action, most are ready to respond.

[To repeat, the crowd is amorphous; it is purely emotional; reason will fail to impress it; it is ready to act.¹ In all these respects the crowd is different from the social group, which at least potentially may be led by arguments and be ready to respond to arguments, though it may follow only those corresponding to the purposes for which the group was formed. These differences between the crowd and a social group, however small the crowd and however large the group may be, lie in the fact that the crowd is amorphous, while the group, at least in one respect, is homogeneous and thus partial. Every group coexists with other groups. Every crowd is, psychologically, a whole, apart from or beyond which no other social being exists or has a right to exist. It feels, so to speak, totalitarian. We shall see the importance of this psychological fact for our modern world. This difference between groups and crowds does not preclude the possibility that a group might act as a crowd. But as soon as the group does so act it tends to become amorphous, as in riots and strikes.

Emotional as the crowd may be, this quality is not in the least a natural phenomenon which can be encountered in the same way everywhere at any time. Freud's opinion that masses wherever they appear are

¹ On the difference between latent and active masses, see Appendix III.—Ed.

of the same nature—namely, that of a primitive herd—is certainly erroneous.¹ Freud argues² that the will power of primitive man was weak, and that therefore individual impulses did not materialize until they were fused into collective impulses. The primitive man did not dare to act alone, and therefore every action was possible only as collective action. Collective action was suggested by the absence of private property, by the similarity of general conditions which made the state of the individual souls very like. As soon as a crowd is formed, according to Freud, this primitive herd revives.

This hypothesis rests on the assumption that we must start from the individual in order to understand the masses. As individuals in the course of history have become more and more rational, crowds would not behave as they do if they consisted of modern individuals. Therefore the suggestion is that primitive man is again awakening within us and that a relapse into the state of masses is an atavism. It consists in the fact that "each individual is bound by libidinal ties on the

¹Freud really criticizes Trotter's theory of the relationship between the crowd and the herd. The author fails to mention that Freud insists on the relationship between the crowd and the horde, rather than the herd. But since the author takes objection to the way in which both Trotter and Freud relate *modern* man to *primitive* man, his criticism is not affected by his failure to do Freud justice terminologically.—Ed.

²*Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, English translation by James Strachey (London 1922), especially Chapter X.—Ed.

one hand to the leader . . . and on the other hand to the other members of the group."¹ I do not think that this interpretation holds. It exaggerates the rationality of modern man outside the crowd. Even though everyone in our day must reason and constantly consider a great number of elements within a situation, our background remains irrational.²

On the other hand, the fact that people are irrational and behave emotionally is not the only characteristic feature of the crowd-phenomenon: the uniformity of people within a crowd is another essential point. The theory of the primitive herd would contribute to the analysis of crowds only if we could assume that primitive man was uniform, and for this we have no proof nor any indication. Nor can we assume that the crowd is the summation of individuals who awake to their subconsciousness: as we do not yet know what subconsciousness is, this explanation is indeed explanation by the unexplained. Furthermore it presupposes that the subconsciousness of individuals is identical; if it were not, how could we explain the uniform emotions and behavior within the crowd? *

The crowd is not a phenomenon identical wherever and whenever it appears, and should therefore be

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.—*Ed.*

² See Appendix I, "On Group Psychology and Magical Thinking."—*Ed.*

* Le Bon, however, seems to assume that this subconsciousness is identical. See *The Crowd*, 14th impression (London: T. F. Unwin, 1922), p. 32.

conceived of as an historical phenomenon showing the features of the period during which it originated. [The existence and activity of the crowd presupposes a common cultural basis in the broadest sense of the word. The masses must have something in common: evaluations, common historical experiences which are important for everybody (such as defeat or victory in wars), religious feelings or race-consciousness.] Beyond that they must be able to speak, and in modern times to read, the same language. If we think of masses apart from their common experiences or evaluations and their common language, then nothing remains but a "herd," from which modern masses are clearly distinguished. The emotions, and especially the substance of the emotions, change, and also the manner of expression. With a modern feeling or phenomenon like patriotism, for instance, the political importance of crowds is on the increase. The attenuation of religious feelings accounts for another change, which, perhaps, may not be permanent. Changes in technique lead to new ways of utilizing crowds. The types of leaders popular with different peoples must also be considered.

Thus crowds are to be taken as social phenomena, changing as every social phenomenon does with changing conditions, and modern civilization favors the formation of crowds.¹

¹ On the question of the "crowd-mind," see Appendix II.—*Ed.*

MASS-ACTION AND LEADERSHIP

So far we have dealt with crowds in general, amorphous masses living emotionally. But the phenomenon is not sufficiently described unless we mention two other elements: the action and the leader. Masses tend to be active. I would not say that they are dynamic. This word, too frequently used nowadays, should be restricted in sociology to a phenomenon, such as a group or institution, which by its very nature is driven into action pointing toward universal changes. Such social phenomena tend to become something which as yet they are not: there is a *Zielstrebigkeit*, a consciousness of purpose; they are, so to speak, alive. Thus a fraternity, a club or a trade union may be called dynamic when it wants to expand or to extend its activities. The crowd, on the other hand, is more likely than such a dynamic institution to burst into sudden action, but it tends to spend its energies: its activity is comparable rather to an explosion than to an action.¹ From this follows the function of crowds in history: in revolutions, as a pressure on the political structure, and recently as the motive power of fascist dictatorships.

The crowd is amorphous and therefore cannot act unless it is integrated. Though some irregular action may follow upon a sudden shock to the crowd—for

¹ For a further elaboration of the behavior of active masses, see Appendices III and IV.—*Ed.*

instance, if it becomes known in a revolutionary situation that some of the revolutionary protagonists have been imprisoned, as in the riots in Vienna in July 1927—usually the crowd will act only if there is a leader. If everything is ripe for action, the situation will suggest to people who are apt to become leaders that they accept the challenge. There are always potential leaders within the crowd, and as it is one of the characteristic features of a leader to realize and take advantage of a situation which “calls for a leader,” it seems as if the situation would create a leader. When a group is suddenly faced by a dangerous situation, such as a fire or a snowstorm in the mountains, the appeal is to the daring, cool, considerate man, who will respond and become “the leader” at once. In similar fashion, when a multitude merges into a crowd, creating a psychological unity, an opportunity is offered to another type of “leader”—the emotional, passionate man, who feels what is in the air more strongly than the crowd. This leader, by giving expression to his feeling, can “tune up” the crowd. Hidden qualities which may be entirely unknown in normal circumstances are suddenly of the greatest importance and make for a new grouping in which the failure of yesterday may acquire power.

The qualities of successful leaders give another clue to the psychological condition of the crowd. They must not only feel the emotions through which the crowd comes into existence, but they must be able to

express them, to find words which make the crowd feel that it is their emotions which are expressed. The real leader of a crowd will be a man with charisma. Charisma, originally a religious or theological concept, means that the man endowed with it is the tool, the mouthpiece of God, the man through whom the will of God is expressed and realized. The man with charisma acts according to the will of God. He represents God's will to such a degree that he may even argue with God, may even disagree—which indicates that he is of the same substance as God, though originally sent by God. The crowd feels this quality in the leader. It feels, rightly or wrongly, that the leader has other sources of wisdom than science or experience; it thinks that for him logical reasoning is not necessary. Its confidence will be without limit; it will give him full power. The leader makes no mistakes, and even if he should his mistakes will contribute to the ultimate success.

The relation between the masses and the leader is therefore of the same type as that between a people and the founder of a religion. We call this power of the leader magic. This quality of exerting a magic influence is not very rare, and can be found on a very high and on a very low level. The magic can be a dark and sinister force, playing upon violent and barbaric emotions. It is alarmingly true that the personality of the leader makes the crowd and will direct its actions. There is a great range within which he can

lead. Inasmuch as crowds are historical forces, the requirements for leadership are subject to change. In our time crowds are called upon more frequently than in former epochs, and the personal element has therefore gained importance to a degree unknown in the past. The emotions which the leader utilizes will always be directed toward the realization of a special goal which must be emphasized and defended against other positions; enemies will be attacked, the merits of the crowd's own aims will be praised. The oratory of the leader cannot be restricted to a lyrical expression of feelings, but will necessarily be dramatic in its fight against other ideas and ideals.¹

This fight is propaganda. The mere expression of emotions, even the mere appeal to emotions, by music or flags or floodlights or any means whatever, may also be called propaganda. But most decisive is the utilization of arguments which are adapted to the special purpose rather than to the finding of truth. As far as propaganda aims at the unleashing of crowds, a special technique is necessary because of the psychological conditions in which the mind of the crowd works. This technique has been developed into perfection within the last decades, when "the age of the masses" has dawned in Europe.²

A multitude whose attention is directed toward a

¹ For the difference of leadership in crowds and groups, see Appendix V.—*Ed.*

² See Appendix VI, "On Propaganda."—*Ed.*

certain purpose becomes a crowd or mass. It will tend to be active, and its activity may reach into any field: religion, race-struggle, politics in general. Revolutionary masses are usually thought of in this connection.

We have distinguished these masses strictly from social groups, which are homogeneous in at least one respect. Many writers, for instance Le Bon, Ortega y Gasset and many sociologists, speak of masses wherever many people are assembled. Five thousand workers in a trade union meeting they would call "masses." I think this terminology is misleading: such meetings of social groups may lead to violent action, the members may behave emotionally, but still they will be restricted in their activities to the special purposes for which they were formed. They will have to reckon with the existence of other groups; their activity therefore will point in a certain direction. Mass-actions on the other hand will frequently be uncertain as to their next and ultimate goals. Masses can be psychologically unbalanced, ready to act, but without knowing any definite purpose. They may simply parade or storm a prison, or kill the head of the state, or overthrow the government, or demand and obtain the dissolution of the parliament. The general direction in which they will move may be fairly certain, but the way in which their urge toward action will materialize is uncertain. Even if the goal is certain, for instance the overthrow of an unpopular government, it is frequently quite uncertain in what way this goal

will be obtained and where this action may ultimately lead. Hence the great chance for a leader to utilize the power of active masses, be they religious, racial or political, directing their outbursts toward ends which are in line with the general mass-feelings, but not at all distinctly formulated or planned.

“ABSTRACT” MASSES

Up to the last decades we could speak of masses only when people were gathered in great numbers. Throughout history the masses are “the street.” The street, i.e., the appearance in the street of great numbers united by the same purpose, was the power frequently dreaded, frequently appealed to. The masses were sometimes “called out”—which presupposes that they had been in some rough way previously organized. They had met in smaller groups on street corners, in beer halls; the living word of innumerable people had given expression to their feelings. As tension increased, the impulse to congregate grew stronger, and at a given moment the masses appeared on the street, ready to act.

Nowadays it is not only the voice of the orator which forms the masses. There is the press, which speaks the language of the man of the street; it coins slogans which make their way, and it forms the mind. It addresses the average man as he is addressed in a crowd, and thus he feels as if he were in the crowd;

and it uses the same means as are used in the crowd—propaganda of every variety. Crowd-feeling is pre-formed and may materialize at any time, when the situation is ripe; this accounts for riotous outbreaks as well as for the consolidation of the whole population in time of a national crisis, such as war.

Everyone has been surprised by the influence of the radio. The radio makes it possible to address vast masses with almost no costs and almost no exertion on the part of the public, for whom in many countries reading is hard labor. In spite of the fact that the listener is alone, usually sitting in his home perhaps with his family or a few friends, he can be affected as if he were in a crowd. This may either be explained by the fact that he knows what it means to be in a crowd, and that his awareness of other hundreds of thousands tuned in on the same program disposes him to listen as if he were in the crowd; or it may be attributed to certain qualities of voice and wording, of which we do not yet know enough. But just as the average man within the crowd is carried away by the speaker's eyes, gestures, voice, so can he be influenced by the radio—especially if he is in the mood to be influenced, which depends on circumstances of the general situation.

Thus an "abstract crowd" may be formed. But only in a democracy—by the vote—could it exert power. Paradoxically, therefore, the democratic system offers the opportunity to sweep men into power by the

democratic action of crowds which no leader would dare call out because he would fear the risks of a revolution.

THE TOTALITARIAN STATE: THE MASS-STATE

In the course of history masses frequently have played a great role. In revolutions, in coups d'état and also in the ordinary current of events (when popular demands were backed by mass-demonstrations), masses have frequently swayed the decisions. But in these cases the masses were called up for certain purposes, and after they had functioned they relapsed again into obscurity; only in revolutionary periods are they more frequently appealed to. But modern political leaders, prospective dictators, have made them the basis of a movement which aims not only at permanence but at the domination, the swallowing up, of the state; they have institutionalized the masses, making them a political and social steam roller, crushing social groups of every kind. In this epoch masses are the permanent basis of a political system, the nature of which is determined by this fact.

[The totalitarian state is the state of the masses; it is different from any state which is based on, and accepts the existence of, social groups. It is bound to change everything. It has built up a spirit in accordance with the mass-movement: it destroys any potential source

of political opposition, and it establishes a center of power which is above and beyond any attack. There is no state in history which can be compared to this totalitarian state, and it is easy now to see why: there has never been a state which destroyed the social structure to such an extent, and there has never been a time which offered the technical opportunities of today to transform the whole people into masses and to keep them in this state.

Chapter Two

THE BACKGROUND OF FASCISM

If we compare the social system as it exists today with the concepts of the future held about 1914 we realize that fascism is a completely new phenomenon. The prewar world visualized either a social revolution as the consequence of modern industry and polarization of society, or as a stabilization of capitalism, a balance of social groups in which the emergence of a new middle class would play a decisive role. Though social revolution was frequently talked of, it was only an abstraction, as no revolutionary situation existed and as the workers' organizations were especially concerned with large programs of reform. Therefore

neither view of the future—the revolutionary no more than the conservative—envisaged a significant struggle or civil war. Even the revolutionaries believed in the democratic system as the political machinery which would be indifferent to the economic system and could therefore undergo a peaceful transformation, once the economic conditions (increase of the proletariat and technical progress) made socialism “necessary.” Only the small bolshevist branch of Russian socialism was really revolutionary, but its ideas were not known or understood in western countries.

Especially in Germany, the homeland of “scientific socialism,” expectation of social revolution was more or less only a holiday-thought. The great demonstrations on May 1st had, characteristically, the eight-hour day as the main objective and any increase in the vote of the workers’ parties in an election was celebrated as a triumph of socialist ideas, which indicates that political and economic progress was expected as a result of the normal functioning of a democratic system—even where dynasties and feudal systems were still in power.

Going from west to east we see that the social system was not even questioned in Great Britain; it was discussed theoretically in central Europe; and only in Russia had the fight between czarism and the people actually broken out in 1905. But no one assumed that Russia could or would take the lead in the social crisis.

There was syndicalism, but it did not make great

headway. Violence was in general abhorred, and industry had disciplined the workers. There was no rapid technical progress in labor-saving devices, and what displacement of workers there was because of such progress was rather effectively offset by compensatory forces. Thus the revolutionary psychology of the Chartist movement had died down, and the improvement in the standard of living—especially conspicuous since the seventies—contributed to the peaceful mood. In none of the great industrial nations did syndicalism become important; the workers did not even know of it. It had some followers in Latin countries, partly because of the more passionate temper of these nations, partly because of their old, anarchistic opposition to the state. But the special theories of Sorel—violence as opposed to the democratic method, the general strike as a social myth, and his emphasis on mystical and subconscious factors—never took root before 1914. The transformation of socialism into an evolutionary theory, defended as such by the revisionists and also accepted in practice by the radical wings of the labor movement, proves the stability of the social system. Transformation might have led, if there had been no World War, and did later lead, to fundamental changes; but the “struggle” or clash of interests was in fact a process of constant negotiation, interrupted by strikes and lockouts not in the least endangering social continuity, and mitigated by the rapid increase of the national dividend.

The far-flung systems of co-operative movements in many European countries also demonstrate that the workers' class built up its own institutions in a peaceful way and on the same legal basis as that of middle-class organizations. The constant attacks of radicals against trade unions, co-operative societies and workers' representatives in parliaments, their accusations that they "betray" the workers, are another proof that the nineteenth century evolved a stratified capitalist society with all the frictions, but also the power, inherent in such a system.

The theoretical concepts, however, did not fit the facts. It seemed that such a struggle must be, in the long run, unbearable. The forces of cohesion were underestimated; and although there was constant tension, the authority of the constitution and of the state was never really challenged. In fact the present crisis of society—which is the subject of this volume—is not the manifestation of the class struggle, but the destruction of society at large, the substitution for society of institutionalized masses. But there is one element in this whole process of industrialization which later contributed to the emergence of modern masses, which made the modern worker and employee susceptible to an ideology serving to destroy society. Industrialization made unemployment, especially for the older worker, a real danger; and the increasing number of industrial workers dependent upon the vicissitudes of the market felt that they had no roots in the

enterprises in which they toiled. Their life no longer had continuity; it was frequently separated into many unconnected periods, and involved moving about the country according to the ups and downs of business. This uncertainty, worse than a low wage level, prepared their minds for a dramatic movement which would not bother with scientific and calm analysis but promised to strike boldly and ruthlessly.

Though a realistic analysis of prewar society shows no sign of an impending upheaval, and though revolutionary utopias visualized the future in terms of peaceful and orderly democratic procedure, the fascist systems were able to utilize some elements of the situation. These elements, the import of which was not realized at the time, are discussed in the following pages.

THE NEW MIDDLE CLASSES

The "new middle classes" evolved rapidly; they were supposed to develop into a proletariat, according to orthodox socialist theory, while the conservatives expected them to become a stabilizing factor, a counterweight to the proletarianization of large masses. The new middle classes, in fact, formed a new layer of society, the size as well as the character of which was a new phenomenon. In Germany, for instance, employees (white-collar workers) and civil servants having the same functions as white-collar workers (lower

officials in the railway system, post offices, social insurance institutions, and so on) constituted about 40 percent of the industrial workers. They did not consider themselves as proletarians; they revolted against the idea that they should be of the same class. In fact there was a deep social cleavage, for neighboring classes in a highly stratified society, with great emphasis on social differences, tend to deepen the gap between them, the more so the greater the potentiality that they merge. These new middle classes rarely intermarried with the proletariat, nor did they meet in the same restaurants, dance halls, etc. They felt themselves between the classes; they were not firmly rooted in the economic system, had no firm basis of property, and were dissatisfied. Their position was insecure and lacked even the psychological support of great numbers, as they were scattered in small groups throughout the economic system. There was no appropriate ideology expressing their function and depicting a future for them. Though a minority of them joined the Socialist Party, they tried to retain their own social status. The white-collar worker in private enterprise felt the threat of unemployment more strongly than the manual worker because in each individual case the loss of a job meant a lowering in his personal standing. They were apt to fall for romantic radical views as they could not hope for transformation into the old type of middle class with its security,

and as merging with the proletariat was repugnant to them.

As far as general political views were concerned this new middle class was very nationalistic. National expansion to them meant both compensation for their feeling of social inferiority, and prospects for better, more independent and highly paid positions. The example of the English middle class, many thousands of whom traveled abroad, showed them the rewards of successful imperialism. This nationalistic feeling separated large groups of white-collar workers from industrial workers who did not share, or at least were not conscious of, such feeling. This evolution implied paradoxically a great instability, once radical emotional movements should shake the nations. For while the workers had found their place in society, and their trade unions and cultural organizations had found ways of co-operating with their "class enemies," the white-collar workers were still undecided and constituted in a time of universal crisis a social dynamite which was the more dangerous because nobody knew how to handle it.

NEW IDEOLOGIES AND OBJECTIVE SCIENCE

There was great uncertainty and uneasiness as to the future of European spiritual life. While the nineteenth century had believed in progress, in the constant in-

crease of objective knowledge, and had cherished the hope of mastering all the problems of society, the beginning of the twentieth century witnessed some strange and disturbing changes. Some of the changes might be mentioned: with the hope for uninterrupted progress gone, with the impact of great differences in interest, science turned from taking any stand and proposed a sharp difference between establishing facts and drawing conclusions. There were skeptics, however, who maintained that even facts could not be presented objectively, although scientists insisted that this should be possible if the observer were on guard against his own evaluations. After a period of some decades during which not only scientists but science as such had been the torchbearer of progress—and had played a great role in practical politics—the conflicts in which science did not dare decide led to a complete withdrawal of responsible scientists from political life. They left the field to various groups in the economic and social realm, saying that they could contribute nothing in deciding right or wrong. They did pretend, however, that they could say what you must hope for when you decide on a certain goal—as if their pattern of rationality were beyond doubt, and as if people torn by emotions were ready to listen to anyone who himself had no will.

Scientists even went so far as to refuse to defend their own value, nobly and dispassionately preserving their “objectivity” even if firebrands should be

thrown into their ivory towers. In fact they hoped nobody would disturb them if they retired to those towers—but later when they were dynamited they did not even think of applying an ordinary logic understandable to everybody. This logic would have been that modern science, too, has its history, and that it originated on the basis of conditions which allowed for its creation; that thinking which is productive, dynamic, valuable, is dependent upon personal freedom, without which people are likely to repeat what they are told like parrots; that he who uses violence lacks human dignity, that he who chases a hare is not a hero, and his only excuse could be that he needs a dinner; in other words, that as scientists they must be ready to defend those values on the basis of which science developed: freedom of thinking, of speech, of argument, respect for truth and trust in the power of the human mind to make its own decisions, and readiness to be responsible for one's own destiny. But, as even these values to them admitted of no proof, they forfeited all right to be heard or respected and found themselves, in the period of upheaval in which we live, in the rear guard of those who applauded their own humiliation and destruction. It is in fact very strange that scientists did not realize that their own thinking, if it is thinking, is the discussion of the various arguments in their minds, the sifting of facts and the relentless search for validity; that they failed to conceive of truth as a dynamic phenomenon, a process of

gradual discovery, a constant wresting from nature and from society. If they had realized this they would have seen science as firmly rooted in a free and personal life instead of seeing it as floating somewhere in the air. Now we know that science is a time-bound exertion of the human mind, and that its "objectivity" is not a formal correctness but the determination to think independently and logically.

But if "objectivity" meant weakness, solitude and reserve, it was inevitable that vitality and energy should emerge. Reverence for the irrational, exaltation of the *élan vital*, hero worship, dreams of a great future—all sorts of unclear metaphysics found eager followers. Science had nothing to set against this trend; it was an evaluation, like others, and on its basis "objective" results were impossible. But the emergence and spreading of these ideas were also facts. Nobody doubted that these ideas would live only in the nineteenth-century setting and would be counterbalanced by other thoughts. Human imagination was too weak to visualize a breaking-down of society, a process in which these ideas, bred by irresponsible and free individuals, could support a system of sinister terrorism. I do not mean to say that these ideas of the irrational were needed to mobilize crowds and to arm the storm-troopers with weapons against intellectuals; but they might explain why the essentially destructive character of modern mass-movements, with their openly professed aim of eradicating any expression of free

opinion and their attacks against execrable objectivity, went almost unnoticed or was even respectfully discussed as the expression of an evaluation against which nothing could be said "on scientific grounds." Is a science that does not dare to defend its right to exist worth anything? Certainly the scientist who retires into his "objectivity" is not entitled to answer this question; the other social groups, which he expected to defend him, answered it in a way which he did not expect.

THE SHATTERING OF AUTHORITY IN THE WORLD WAR

European countries had lived, before the World War, under established authorities which were traditional, and at the same time tried—more or less—to make the unavoidable concessions to "modern thought." As most regimes considered a socialist state as unavoidable, they made concessions; general franchise, social insurance, freedom of the press were accepted, at least to a great extent, and trade unions met little resistance. Republics, constitutional and unconstitutional monarchies (with the exception of Russia) became very similar. These compromises were intended to envelop the workers' movements, and to a great extent they succeeded since even the seemingly radical parties did not seriously challenge the social and political system.

The World War changed everything. When the

masses were armed and had to fight, and when on the "home front" women and children had to endure unheard-of hardships, the rhetoric of the radical movements became realistic, and the ruling classes expected to be overthrown and expropriated—at least in the defeated countries. But everywhere, even in the victorious countries, the governments had exposed the secret of their power: that it rested to a great extent on the consent of the various social groups, whether this consent were enthusiastic or rather passive. People at large had seen that the power could weaken; they had seen that governments had to beg for the support and active co-operation of everyone; they had felt the cracking of the walls, the vibration of the foundations. In many countries even the soldiers and officers had joined seditious masses. Nothing of that kind had happened in modern countries for many decades.

The great teaching of these years was not lost on the leaders of the fascist movements which were to emerge later. They saw that the ties between the government and the army could be loosened, that no army recruited from the people can be psychologically separated from society. Once the general feeling spreads that fundamental changes are in the air, the soldiers will begin to think and the officers will waver. Given this situation, the authorities will lose confidence in themselves. The war had brought the first great psychological crisis, the proof for the old proverb that a king is king only as long as the people be-

lieve him to be king, that this serene majesty crumbles to dust if he is seen as an ordinary man who happens to wear a crown. The war had brought not only this proof but the further insight that fundamental psychological attitudes can be changed only under the impact of terrific experiences, while without these experiences the weight of tradition, established patterns of behavior and inherited ways of thinking are an armor which no political argument can penetrate. Thus the war had proved that modern life made for a stronger and at the same time a more vulnerable state. It had proved that democracy in the general sense, with its freedom for discriminating ideas, exposes the governing authority to terrific attacks if the complexities of modern life cannot be controlled and if the conquest of power is made the objective of determined political groups.

UNSOLVED ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

The epoch which we call late capitalism is full of mysteries for the ordinary man. These mysteries multiplied after the war when it was seen that productive power increases while people willing to work are made idle; that a superabundance of commodities threatens the world with bankruptcy, or that the more commodities are for sale the less can be bought; that the flow of goods is interrupted by lack of money so that no one can buy; but that catastrophe is equally

imminent in a runaway inflation when everyone has more money than he can spend. And the theories dealing with these problems were equally complex and contradictory: saving and spending were advocated at the same time; balancing the budget and deficit-economy were prescribed; some economists maintained that wages were too low and profits too high, thus interrupting the flow of commodities; and others said that it was entirely because of low profits that no new enterprises were started and thus labor and capital lay idle.

Conflicting theories in themselves do no harm if nobody is interested in them, and nobody would be interested if the theories related to a satisfactory situation. But these conflicting theories were brought to public attention by the great depression, which was everyone's business and concern. They were not, like Einstein's theory of relativity, brought about by observation of the starlit sky, not affecting anyone's life. The scientists could build giant telescopes to test that theory and wait for another constellation in the firmament, favorable for observation. The mysterious perplexities, however, demanded immediate solution. Mysteries always breed mysticism, and mysticism is allied with blind faith; if we do not understand we turn to hope, to confidence in a panacea, a party, a man. Democracy makes people impatient, and impatient people will demand action; thus demo-

cracy, faced with thorny and difficult problems, made people trust in miracles.

DEMOCRACY'S RETREAT FROM POLITICS

Democracy proved to be a political system that can easily degenerate into a doctrine. Democratic doctrine is usually abstract. It revels in the principles of equality and liberty, and interprets these principles in a formal way, making no distinctions between the liberty of the loyal citizen and of the political gangster. It concedes perfect freedom to any idea, even if that idea aims at the destruction of liberty. Would not—so the formal doctrine says—the suppression of ideas, whatever they might be, imply that in the course of events any idea can be suppressed? This reasoning is as logical as a belief that the detention of a criminal in Alcatraz should cause a decent citizen to fear for his liberty.

But this is, of course, not a question of laws. Once democracy decides upon repression awkward problems evolve. It was of greater importance for the emergence of fascism that democracy did not realize that it is a political system—that it is based on power and must reassert its power daily, and that the only way to reassert power is to induce people to believe in it.

The democratic way of allowing everyone free-

dom in what he thinks or does, politically, rested on the eighteenth-century conviction that citizens are rational beings who know everything, who have clear judgment and who—in accordance with human nature—are benevolent, tolerant and want the common good. Or, even worse, it rested on the hypothesis that the pursuit of egoistic ends would result in a perfect harmony of individual and common interests. Democracy did not realize that citizens are, so to speak, sheets of white paper on which anyone can write who uses the facilities offered by a system of freedom, and it refused to write anything on the sheets itself except the bill of rights, in antiquated terms, on infrequent holidays.

In Germany especially was developed the theory of a state which is above politics, where the government should administer the realm "objectively" while the field of politics should be left entirely to political parties. This theory, advocated particularly by the opposition, went so far as to deny the government the moral right to use the radio for political purposes. The suggestion that the army should be a government army and be educated in a democratic spirit would have elicited only vehement, outraged attacks against the government, which in its turn would not have dared to meet such attacks with appropriate means.

To sum up, democracy was interpreted as "domestic peace at any price." Political groups acquired the

standing of almost sovereign powers within the state. Democratic parties were curbed in their fight against their enemies, who threatened them with violent punishment and annihilation as soon as they came into power; and even that was considered the legitimate and lawful expression of a political view, which could not be opposed by the state "on constitutional grounds." When the situation developed so far that the state did not insist on a monopoly of armed forces when the fascist groups began to wear uniforms and claim functions of the police, while the government did nothing to mobilize its loyal supporters when derisory propaganda, lies, slander, filled the papers without being checked—democracy was then in fact abandoned by the democrats. They fell victim to the illusions of the eighteenth century; and the teachings of Le Bon, Graham Wallas, Nietzsche and a score of others—who had said everything it was necessary to know—were lost on them. Nor is it right to say that democracy would have lacked supporters; what it lacked was organization and leadership, and the determination to defend by attack.

THE FEAR OF BOLSHEVISM

There was also the bogey of communism. Communism in Germany, if we consider it as a revolutionary movement, had always been very weak. Even be-

tween 1918 and 1923, when civil wars flared up here and there, the majority of the workers remained faithful to the Social Democrats, who at that time represented the conservative wing of the labor movement. The political and revolutionary tension was temporary, however, and caused mainly by the inflation; after the stabilization of the currency the communist movement became weaker and never regained its old strength. It was never able to organize the masses for real action (very different from the fascist groups) and the six million votes polled were the expression of protest against a regime that could not cope with unemployment. But the party existed, and its slavish acceptance of anything that happened in Russia made it easy to frighten the farmers, who did not want to take any chances and decided to back those who beat up the communists.

Looking back at the turbulent years since 1918, we can see now that even during the prosperous and safe years of the last long period of prosperity, up to 1929 and 1930, the Bolshevik Revolution had made the deepest impression—deeper even than war and inflation. You can recover from wars as well as from inflation, but bolshevism is a definite end, a definite destruction. Thus bolshevism frightened everyone who had a little property, or hoped to acquire it in the future, into the ranks of those reactionary and fascist movements which seemed the only reliable enemies of communists, even though

these movements did everything they could to destroy democracy. It might well be said, therefore, that fear of communism contributed more than anything else to the rise and victory of fascism in Germany.]

The weakness of democracy, the disintegration of its ideas, the emergence of new classes with new ideologies, unsolved economic problems, the shattering of authority, the fear of bolshevism—all these factors contributed to the conquest of power by the fascists. But if the fascists had been a political party like other parties, and as the “clever people” believed it to be, not much would have changed. These “clever people” were sure that the power of the social groups would not greatly change. They did not realize that fascism was a new phenomenon, the movement of masses, bound to destroy society and to bury under its ruins groups, institutions, ideas, patterns of behavior which had never been seriously questioned. They did not realize that with the emergence of fascism a new epoch began, the nature and politics of which even the fascist leaders did not visualize.

A NOTE ON JAPAN

The case of Japan shows that popular opinion, lumping together all kinds of regimes with more or less liberal and progressive tendencies as “democracies,” and all kinds of reactionary regimes as “fascist,” must

miss the very meaning of the new mass-state. The real opposites are states based on a stratified society and states based on masses. The state of the older type, based on a stratified society, might be progressive or reactionary; history was molded by these states up to the emergence of the state of the masses. The state of the masses can probably be equally progressive or reactionary, though the distinction would lose much of its weight. History alone will show whether a progressive or, what is more important, a humanitarian state of the masses can develop.

It became the fashion after Mussolini set up his fascist state to term any reactionary state as fascist, which misses the point. Japan is in this way termed a fascist state, though the Japanese, even the progressive Japanese, protest that she is not. Japan has preserved up to the present time many elements of the feudal period: the social groups are set each against the others, not as enemies, to be sure, but as very specific social institutions, full of life, cohesive and well ordered. Each group has its weight in society and in the state. The state, represented by the emperor, or, according to the official ideology, being the emperor, does not deny the existence nor the function of these groups, even in the realm of politics. The emperor is the embodiment of the spirit of the Japanese nation, but so far no attempt has been made to level down its social stratification. The bureaucracy and the army wield a tremendous power,

but there too the various departments have their more or less independent positions; they are neither dissolved into a homogeneous and authoritatively directed machinery, nor are they completely integrated. There is, consequently, no fascist party leading the masses toward conquest of the state.

What we now have in Japan is the organization of society for the war in China, the mobilization of its resources and of its spirit. The parliament still plays a role. Public opinion is not manufactured, as there are still independent sources influencing it. Censorship is strict, as is to be expected during a war, but magazines, even those for the wider public, are not yet deprived of their freedom of expression. The soldiers returning from China are not a passive material to be absorbed by a fascist ideology—at least not at the present time. They are disillusioned, but of just those ideals which form the ideological basis of fascism. Inasmuch as fascism breeds on the illusions of those disillusioned with democracy, the time is not ripe for a Japanese movement of the Italian or German type.

These remarks may serve to show that states are very complex phenomena which must be analyzed carefully; abstract concepts can do great harm. There have been situations in the last years when allegedly fascist governments were fought against with the one result that what was left of the power of social groups was destroyed in favor of a party which relied on

the atomization of the nation and its reduction to masses; these then became an easy prey to their leaders. If we recognize that a regime like the present one in Japan still has its social and psychological roots in the past, that it is still flexible enough to be transformed if the general situation changes, we shall see that it is fundamentally different from fascism. For fascism is the dictatorship by masses over the masses themselves and cannot be molded or transformed except by a revolution, which is not likely to break out unless there is a defeat on the battlefield.

Chapter Three

THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN MASSES: ITALY

MASSES IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The nineteenth century, it has been said, gave birth to modern masses and mass-movements, but what is really meant by this statement is that in this period social groups, numbering millions, actively entered the political scene. They did not cease to be groups, however, although they aspired to social leadership and built up parties claiming a following from all social strata. Society was not yet atomized and masses made their appearance only at rare moments.

That great parties, especially the workers' parties,

considered themselves as masses is an indication of the emotional element inherent in their character. But they did not use violence and terrorism as their main tactics. They admitted the existence of other parties and groups, which they challenged with arguments, not with clubs. They rallied their followers behind a flag but did not arm them. They professed to be engaging in the class struggle, but it was rather an economic fight which did not develop into a major political action; the only case in European history of a general strike being used as a political weapon was that called by the German republican government when it defeated the Kapp Putsch.

The historical mission of masses, if there is any, is to precipitate a decision. The main role of masses in a revolution is to exert such pressure on the government and its armed forces that their morale is broken, so that they are no longer reliable. Then the opposition can seize power, take command of the army and the police, and build up its regime. To what extent the new era will be a compromise with the old depends upon the will to power, the determination of the new rulers and the power of resistance of the old groups. But in historical revolutions or social catastrophes, up to the Bolshevik Revolution, the masses have been dismissed after they have served the purpose of breaking down the last resistance. The usurpers, the dictators who, since the days of Caesar, have appealed to the masses, have also dismissed these

masses after they have served their initial purpose. They always thought in terms of the old society when they seized power, and sooner or later they found a compromise with the various layers of society. They relied mainly, to be sure, on their own followers, whom they put into the important positions; but as they did not fundamentally change the social pyramid nor destroy the existing positions of power, they had to adjust their regimes to the impact of economic interests. This influence is so great that sooner or later such a usurper or dictator appears as, and actually becomes, the representative or leader of the ruling classes. A regime can be immune to these influences only if it has something to set against them. The army might provide this support, to some extent, but without a social basis it cannot rule either. What appeared as masses in European history before the war was therefore only a casual and temporary flocking together of urban inhabitants. When they filled the streets, they appeared to be a unified whole, but actually they were either casual onlookers drawn into action by the general excitement, or in part they belonged to various social strata to which they were still loyal. As soon as the excitement abated, the crowd fell apart. As soon as the smoke of street battles faded away into the air, the old social structure reappeared, perhaps with fundamental changes in the distribution of power. Nothing definite was built upon the masses, essential though they fre-

quently were in bringing about the shift from one social group to another.

DESTRUCTION OF SOCIETY BY FASCISM

The decisive new feature of fascism—in Italy not from the outset, but gradually, and in Germany from its first emergence—is that it is built on masses. The fascist parties refuse to be parties standing, as groups, for certain principles and facing other groups; they refuse to unite the whole population in harmony and tolerance. They are an ironclad, frenzied crowd, commanded by leaders who never forget to keep them in an emotional flux. The fascist party is totalitarian—which does not mean that it wants to embrace the whole population and to include various political views, as was believed in the beginning and even later by many who thought of it as a society in miniature. It is the *only* organization tolerated, and, since it cannot feel secure if there is any group bent on independent ideas, it insists on the destruction of all the various groups in the economic, social and cultural fields. Thus fascism destroys society as history has known it, and aims at melting it down to a crowd. In order to transform the whole population into a crowd which cannot fail to respond to the harangues of its leaders, which cannot fall apart when it leaves the meeting hall, in order to transform

every single man and woman into a mass-man, fascism must level down the social structure, destroy any seed of grouping, stamp out free speech and press, which are the channels through which mind can approach mind: in fact fascism must go even farther, it must destroy the family, terrorize thinking and speech even there. When fascism is attacked, it is mostly the terror, the suppression of free press and speech, that is stressed, and it is frequently asked how this can be possible. This question overlooks the fact that the suppression of free speech and thinking is only the last step in a ruthless destruction of all groups and institutions which have been built up by mankind in a history of millennia. It is this destruction which denotes a new epoch, an epoch in which human voices are blotted out by the din of mass-meetings and harsh commands; an epoch in which no one is left to himself for a moment, lest he realize that he is enchained; an epoch in which everyone is prevented from living in silence, from looking into himself and awakening to his own consciousness; an epoch in which mankind has set out to march and to march, without knowing where.

There has been no such time heretofore in history. Fascism has frequently been called a religion, and it is, to a great extent, an army; but neither the religious community nor the mass army has atomized society. Let us pause to consider briefly what it is that distin-

guishes these social structures from the modern mass-state.

DIGRESSION I: THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

The religious community is certainly not a social group; it might comprise the whole population, and even where it does not there is rarely, in modern times, a social struggle between religions. But whatever the situation might be, the religious community gives free way to social forces, it tries to serve all of them and be served by all of them. It is, in the first place, a community in God; even where it has had political ambitions, like the Catholic Church, it has been anxious to preserve the social groupings, even going so far as to develop a social philosophy according to which the various groups may work out their destiny in harmony with each other. There have been religions that built up a conquering state, uniting everyone in a fighting force. Mohammedanism is the most striking example: but to use it as an illustration shows how far from this idea were the western churches—even the Russian Orthodox Church, which was closest to the state but did not wish to supplant the state and society. Ideas of an all-powerful church might permeate the whole people, might even be backed by force, but as long as society continued to exist with its own institutions there was the likeli-

hood of evolving an independent center of thinking and feeling, a differentiation of ideas.

DIGRESSION II: THE MASS-ARMY

The army also embraces various social groups. The old armies in Europe, however, were differentiated, while the French revolutionary armies, the *levées en masse*, united—or at least aimed at uniting—the whole population for one purpose, perhaps for the first time in history. But mass-armies, as they developed on this pattern during the nineteenth century, could not be kept firmly together by patriotism alone; their cohesion depended on a strict hierarchy, on discipline and on a long period of education. This education began in the elementary school, where loyalty and allegiance to country, readiness to conform to the regime, fortitude and obedience were inculcated as main virtues and values. When the young boys were enlisted as recruits they were well prepared for the period of drill, which could easily develop, at least in great numbers of them, the genuine soldier's spirit. To be sure, there were always recalcitrants and egoists—but they were repressed and the limitations on the time of military service made them willing to obey and even to enjoy it. The purpose as well as the organization of the army, the heavy load of work that had to be done, made it possible to restrict the ideology within the army to a minimum and, to a great extent,

to substitute for it unquestioning acceptance of duty.

Even if we do not minimize the coercion, the restriction of personal liberty, the hardships for families whose breadwinners were kept from their employment for years, the constant threat to the self-determination of the people, we must recognize that even the largest and most disciplined army, an army that was a reliable source of power in the hands of an absolute government, was not independent of the social structure of the country, but changed its nature and its political function gradually in pace with economic and social change. It is equally true that even in a thoroughly militaristic country society still continued to exist, and with it that variety of ideas and of interests which in itself guarantees a certain realm of liberty, a certain freedom to express one's own thoughts. More than that, society remained productive of ideas within its groups, and there was constant change of the social system. Ossification of the social and cultural setup was impossible in these conditions. And still, the army was the closest approach to a disciplined, well-armed and obedient mass dominating society—a mass kept under constant control and ready to respond to commands and to those emotional incitements which the government chose to use. But, though it was the closest approach, we need only recall the continuation of society in order to see why no militaristic or dictatorial army, no dictator resting on the army, could wield unrestricted

and lasting power. That is the fundamental reason for the saying, "One cannot sit on bayonets."

THE SUBSTITUTION OF CROWDS FOR SOCIETY IN FASCISM

That an autocratic and militaristic regime should be considered as a state of freedom—even, though to a small extent, for the exploited and subjected classes—proves clearly that modern fascism rests on a principle which is fundamentally different from any system that has existed for millennia. It has frequently been said that the Dark Ages have returned or that civilization is collapsing, that people are deprived of the rights for which they fought during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This is an understatement: it is not suppression as such, it is not the censorship of the free press, it is not the persecution of a minority, it is not the inculcation of an ideology, which is the decisive point. What makes fascism an epochal change, a turning point in history, is that for the first time mankind must witness not the domination, but the destruction of society; the pulverization of all groups; the melting together of all the various layers of society into crowds; the transformation of these crowds into one social institution dominated and directed by doctrines intended to guarantee an eternal state in which nothing can change.

The inner paradox of such a state, however, arises

from the very fact that every social group is emasculated and that crowds are substituted for society. Now crowds are, sociologically and psychologically, dynamite that is bound to explode. Crowds can be kept together and in order only if they can be moved and satisfied emotionally; therefore the policy guiding a crowd-state must be dynamic, it must constantly race to action, it cannot be "appeased"—be it in domestic or foreign policy.

ITALIAN FASCISM

The fruitfulness of the thesis advanced here might be examined by applying it to fascism and National Socialism. Nationalistic passion played a great role in both movements. Fascism in Italy was initiated by d'Annunzio's adventure in Fiume. The adventure itself became very popular and was attributed to the magic power of enthusiasm, although the brunt of it had been borne by parts of the regular army joining d'Annunzio's expedition and acting without or even against orders. The story of the Fiuman Empire has been frequently told, and need not be retold here. When the adventure was liquidated by the Giolitti government, it had left its traces and the memory of a "state" founded on a national revolution, based on inflamed masses, a state with a leader who was primarily an orator and kept his people in constant tension by oratory, a state where public opinion was

not the result of the slowly working interplay of interests and ideas, but where constant action and excitement were the order of the day. It was the first state in which symbols, flags, war-cries, handraising, uniforms and parading were the means of continuing a spell based mainly on the lack of resistance against the leader and his masses. D'Annunzio had gone even further and had drafted his famous constitution, which copied the façade of a really static medieval society by destroying whatever might be a representation of modern social forces. Thus the totalitarian state made its appearance on the square of Fiume, complete but for its power. It was symbolic of its later realization: it would be ephemeral and flimsy if the social forces were strong enough to assert themselves, while it could retain power and consolidate if its efforts in destroying society were successful.

Thus the totalitarian state, in its first burlesque phase, already showed its main driving force: masses, made the main institution and the highest tribunal of the state. But no one could know this when fascism appeared on the scene, not even the fascists themselves. It started like other enthusiastic movements—more violent, to be sure, even than syndicalism, which had never gained the support of large workers' groups. It started as a movement driven by nationalistic passions, directed against socialism. With the tricolored flag flying, the "historical powers" felt safe. There had to be masses on the street if the aim

was destruction of the workers' institutions. The capitalists thought these boys were "their boys." Thus the first beginnings of the disruption of society were widely applauded and secretly appreciated even by those who would not openly subscribe to violence. History records that there was no imminent nor any potential danger of bolshevism in Italy, nor anywhere else in Europe after the breakdown of the short-lived dictatorships in Munich and Budapest, and, as Borgese aptly remarks,¹ after the defeat of the Russian army in the Polish-Russian war. But this does not mean that the "bolshevist menace" was not an effective argument for building up a belligerent organization against it—just as it is quite sufficient to create a war-scare in order to get popular support for armament expenditures.

Apart from the outcry against nonexistent communists, there was not even a sketchy program for which the fascists stood. They represented rather the dissatisfied masses with no distinct character. There was dissatisfaction with the map as it took shape in Versailles; dissatisfaction of the veterans with the scanty rewards of the war. The drab misery of daily life in the poor country contrasted too sharply with wishful dreams of past days of power: wishful dreams crop up from the past even more easily than from the present.

¹ G. A. Borgese, *Goliath: The March of Fascism* (New York: The Viking Press, Inc., 1937), p. 214.

Then there were in Italy, as everywhere, the disappointed intellectuals, the university graduates with no prospects of an adequate job and the white-collar workers whose psychic depression in times of unemployment is greater the more the group lives on rhetoric. The social situation, in short, offered an opportunity for launching a political movement which would unite all these various unrelated groups. It has frequently been said, and with reason, that Mussolini did not create fascism, but rather that fascism created him, and kept him, so to speak, "on the track" whenever he wanted to compromise with the old parties, or the capitalists, or the socialists. In fact, during the various crises of this regime, it was always the "movement" which enforced its special tactics, its uncompromising attitude, its emotional élan upon the leader. Now what does this mean? It can mean only that the fascist movement had some energy and some direction of its own. This comes from the very fact that the movement consists of institutionalized, organized, electrified masses, determined to conquer the state.

The masses under Italian fascism, like those later in Germany, have a special structure: the nucleus is an armed force, built up by subsidizing, uniforming and training young members of the Fascist Party as a guard and as gangs drilled for street fights and for breaking up political meetings. These armed forces were an entirely new political phenomenon. Veterans and young intellectuals followed the fascist flag, and

upon the masses the policy of openly professed violence made a tremendous impression. Such an armed force, breaking up meetings, later burning newspaper offices, ransacking the offices of trade unions and co-operative societies, dosing its opponents with castor oil, beating them up, leaving them unconscious on open squares—all this under the eyes of the police, who did nothing to oppose the lawbreakers—attracted the crowds with a magnetic power. That the veterans, the *Arditi*, could continue to do without fear or risk what they had been commanded to do under very dangerous conditions during the war, brought about the enlistment and assistance of determined and ruthless men. Everyone who had no chance in a peaceful occupation was offered the opportunity to be a soldier in a civil war in which the opponent was not armed. Pent-up resentment found an easy outlet, as it would be easy in any country to recruit a force which believes in violence and is ready to deal with opponents as their commanders bid them. Such a crowd will develop into an armed force—not at all an army—with which power can be conquered if there is no resistance.

That there was so little resistance in Italy was owing to the emergence of the party. This party, or movement as it calls itself, had to be built up from nothing. There was no precedent for the old fascist parties, but the masses offer the best concept to fit their character: there was no connection with any

other party, and no tradition. The party wanted to get hold of energetic men; it wanted action; it did not care whether its policy was consistent, providing it was aggressive and could win new followers. In the beginning there was no fascist program in Italy, only the purpose of conquering power—and of conquering it, not by the vote, but by means of violence, the terrorizing of other parties and the hypnotizing of the masses. Whatever policy the fascists later adopted, it was not planned from the outset and it served only the purpose of conquering and maintaining power.

This again appeals to the masses: they can be kept together as long as there is anything to conquer. By subordinating its policy to the masses, fascism kept them together—much to the surprise and disappointment of the old and old-fashioned politicians who expected, sooner or later, some compromise. They would not have expected a compromise if they had taken seriously the speeches and acts of Mussolini.¹ They did not, however; nor did the Prussian junkers who went to Italy after 1928 in order to study “fascist methods,” hoping to participate in an energetic

¹ At the beginning of the movement Mussolini had given the warning that fascism is no “lightning conductor.” Cited in his article on fascism which he published in 1932 in the *Enciclopedia Italiana*. I quote from the authorized English translation by Jane Soames, which was published in London in 1933 as one of the Day to Day Pamphlets under the title *The Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism* (p. 9).

fascist regime in Germany which would protect them against the workers, give them the prices they wanted and offer them the dominating position in the Prussian bureaucracy.

All those early and later supporters of the fascist movements, the aristocrats, the millionaires of industry, the bankers, the officers of the army, the church, were too convinced of their own indispensability to fear the rule of the party which they believed to be the radical right wing. They had less political instinct than the workers, who never gave power to the communists because they had some notion of what dictatorship and loss of freedom could mean. But the groups on the right were always cynical, their tradition of ruling emboldened them and they were sure that *their* army and bureaucracy would win the day once the props were knocked from under the democratic government.

The appeal of the nationalistic cry, the war against workers' organization, the glorification of violence, was somewhat dimmed, however, by the language used against the bourgeoisie and the established historical powers. Again and again fascism, and even more National Socialism, professed to be a revolutionary power. The fascist leaders ridiculed, much to the delight of their audience, the aristocrats, the bankers, the millionaires; they stressed their own youth, they boasted of their muscles and their

strength to smash all opposition and to conquer the state against everyone. This the conservatives would not believe but took as demagogy, necessary for the consumption of the followers; they did not doubt that, after success, the masses would be "dismissed" and would return to their slums and workshops. It is hardly believable today that this was the prevalent view in conservative quarters—but they were so hypnotized by the bolshevist danger that they did not realize what was facing them.

The history of fascism well confirms the statement that there emerged, in Italy, a mass-movement to which the leaders had to conform once it was well under way. I do not assume that it was clear from the outset what fascism meant to the leaders; Mussolini himself might have thought he could direct it and later adapt it to "legality." In his contempt for the masses, Mussolini relied on his will to stir them up and on his power to make them obedient again. These are his words: "You can lever up men as you can lever up inert matter. Human masses have the same inertia as inorganic masses. The saying, 'Give me a point of support and I will raise the world' is true also, and perhaps above all in the realm of the mind. Our problem is to find a point of support."¹

But when, in establishing the Fascist Party, all the component groups were to be melted into one solid

¹ Herman Finer, *Mussolini's Italy* (London 1935), p. 110.

bloc, party headquarters began an attempt to discipline the ruffians.¹ The events which followed proved that these endeavors were in vain. The movement had gained strength during those two years of ruthless violence in the streets. The fascists kept discipline as long as they could indulge in all their passions under the party flag; but the special secret discussion of pacification at the first party congress (November 1921) probably made it clear to Mussolini that he had only the alternatives of crushing the whole movement or of "leading" it in conformance with its nature. And this nature was exactly that of a mass-movement, in which the militia represented the organization of the young, ruthless, active elements, rushing forward, and behind them the crowd, enjoying its freedom to act under guidance and protection.

The composition of the fascist movement also shows its mass-character. The fascist flag was followed in the beginning by revolutionary syndicalists; by the *Arditi*, who could not forget the war; by discontented demobilized officers, who had no future but to become salesmen; by soldiers; by spirited youths; by loafers and professional criminals; by rich intellectuals who feared the workers, and by desperately poor intellectuals; by a mixture of "patriotic" agrarians, craftsmen and others.²

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

² *Ibid.*, p. 122.

Equally interesting are the figures of the first party census¹ giving the social status of about 142,000, or about 50 percent, of the party members:

Merchants and artisans	13,879
Industrialists	4,269
Civil servants and soldiers	7,209
Employees	14,989
Teachers	1,680
Students	19,783
Seamen in Merchant Marine	1,506
Industrial workers	23,418
Agricultural workers	36,847
Landowners (including small proprietors and contract labor)	18,186

All the various layers of society were represented, all social groups suspended in this crowd. If there was any doctrine it had to be based, not on ideas or argument, but on emotion, and action on the street had to remain of the first importance.

Fascism, says Mussolini himself in his article in the *Enciclopedia Italiana*,² has from its inception been practical, not theoretical. It was not one party among others, but a living movement in opposition to all political parties as such. "The battle had to be fought in the towns and villages." The men "knew how to die. Doctrine beautifully defined and carefully elucidated, with headlines and paragraphs, might be lack-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

² Quotations are all from the authorized English translation, cited above.—Ed.

ing; but there was to take its place something more decisive—Faith” (p. 10).

Enumerating the principles of fascist doctrine as set up after the event by Mussolini, we find that each point must have appealed to an emotional movement: Fascism “believes neither in the possibility nor the utility of perpetual peace”; pacifism is “an act of cowardice in the face of sacrifice”; war “puts the stamp of nobility on the peoples who have the courage to meet it” (p. 11). Socialism is denounced; there is no general love for mankind. The idea that people are directed by their economic interest is wrong. “Fascism, now and always, believes in holiness and in heroism” (p. 13). Fascism, the declaration continues—probably to the surprise of many of its followers—repudiates the conception of “economic” happiness which socialism seeks to realize: identification of well-being with happiness would reduce men to the level of animals, caring only to be fat and well fed, and thus degrade humanity to a purely physical existence.

Equally vehement are the attacks against liberalism, which is held responsible for the World War, now termed the greatest crime against mankind: “Never has any religion demanded of its votaries such a monstrous sacrifice” (p. 18). (Note that sacrifices are, in this case, not “noble.”)

But the fight against socialism and liberalism, Mussolini warns, must not be interpreted as a reversion

to the period before 1789. The fascist state must be absolute, and, in contrast, all individuals or groups are relative, only to be conceived of in their relation to the state. The state is a collective body, conscious of itself; "it has itself a will and a personality—thus it may be called the 'ethic' State" (p. 21). It is not dominated by a king nor an aristocracy, but by the Fascist Party. The party is the embodiment of the spirit that created the state; it is the leading, the dynamic, the self-conscious group. It is, with a somersault, the real democracy: "organized, centralized, authoritative" (p. 16).

There could be no ideology more suited to a state which rests on amorphous masses. They are not, in themselves, articulate; nor can they act by themselves, or even be kept together. They need a leader in the meeting. If masses are to constitute the social basis of a state, if expression of public opinion is to emanate from them, they must be permanently led. Leadership of masses must be threefold: imposing on them ideas, which must, however, be suited to them; making them act or keeping them alive; and preventing any chance of independent trends, which might make the masses drift into a dangerous adventure, perhaps even rebellion.

This leadership—which, as in the case of fascism, will always be a personal leadership that cannot change—evolves an institution which is also a mass but at the same time a center of power: the party.

It can be used, if need be, against the wider, unorganized, amorphous masses, or the "street." Even where the street is superficially organized, as in Germany, where every tenement or apartment house is organized and at the same time supervised and controlled, the power would not be safe, nor could the leader rely upon the masses, if there were not the party between himself and the crowd.

We spoke above of the Fascist Party and its special nature in its ascendancy. Once the political system has been established, once the other political parties are crushed and the state becomes exclusively a domain of the party, its function changes. Again, as far as the amorphous crowds are concerned, the functions are threefold: First, the party offers a career to those individuals who are energetic and active, who want to earn laurels or be promoted. It is the only organization in which dangerously ambitious individuals can be absorbed. The longer the system exists, the more the positions of real power will be reserved for those who grew up within the party. Second, the party becomes the institution within which legitimate and illegitimate interests find their representation. Third, the party, being flexible in its composition because of purges and new admissions, keeps contact with the wide masses, and can mobilize them almost instantaneously. Whenever activity of the masses is required in order to back or to give prominence to a decision or intention of the govern-

ment (especially in foreign policy), the party plays its role. It is equally important whenever there develop dangerous tensions within the masses; such tensions the party can ascertain, work against and perhaps deflect.

But it is and remains of paramount importance that through the party the leader keep in touch with the masses. If that were not the case, the party would very quickly transform itself into an exploiting oligarchy, which—even if it continued to absorb new members—could not fail to lose ground. It would then be exposed to the dangers of a psychological crisis, which is very likely to arise whenever the channels between the ruling groups and the population are blocked. The difference between fascism and other regimes consists mainly in the fact that it is based on amorphous masses, as we described them in the first chapter, and not on powerful groups within a well-stratified society.

This interpretation is at variance with views expressed by most antifascists as well as by most fascists. The adversaries of fascism, especially Italian writers, stress the leader above all. They believe that fascism is Mussolini and that Mussolini is fascism. Since fascism is a mass-movement, the leading personality is of decisive importance. He makes the masses articulate, he sounds the keynote for their actions. But what he does is not arbitrary; he must feel his way, sound out the prevalent emotions. He is as

much guided as he is the guide. Thus fascism is not Mussolini. Frequently he is referred to as an anarchist; but an anarchist who builds up disciplined troops for conquering the state, and afterward extols the state, is a curious phenomenon. Thus I venture the statement that fascism was in the beginning a violent group, gaining by the weakness of its adversaries; that it progressed on its way because it did not find serious resistance; that it was helped and glorified by the admiration of morbid intellectuals for "strong men" and for violence; that it beat the frightened social groups into obedience—again profiting from the notion that hooligans are heroes if they use as their battle-cries words coined by d'Annunzio; and that Mussolini, feeling his way step by step, molded ever larger multitudes into institutionalized masses. These masses then dictated the propaganda, the politics, the rhetoric, the glamorous words, the display of force and of uniforms—just as they made necessary some measures of social welfare, some care for the poor, some social policy, which, however, in its extent as well as in its efficiency is far below the level of the social policy of "liberalistic" countries.

Italian fascism elaborated the technique, later brought to perfection by National Socialism, of fastening upon the mind and passions of children and young people. It tried thus to prevent the formation of any independent ideas, to avert the influence of humanistic tradition, to minimize the power of "reac-

tionary" parents. As there can be no vacuum, fascism substituted for these values its own ideology, by means of uniforms, marching, brass bands and military exercises from earliest youth. Young boys and girls were transformed into soldiers. But to be a soldier can hardly satisfy the average citizen throughout his whole life. Thus the soldier had to be a "mass-man" at the same time, and the fascist troops, though disciplined, were allowed to remain crowds. They were allowed to follow their passions, to shout, to intimidate workers as well as "bourgeois," to feel that they were masters.

This difference between an army and the fascist militia in all its parts is decisive; it means that the armed fascist forces are not only a means toward an end—the maintenance of power—but an end in themselves. The building up of these armed forces was probably the only way in which the masses could be disciplined to some extent, their explosive power kept within certain limits—and yet preserved. The "totalitarianism" of the state has the same significance. It transforms every organ of the state into a part of this militia. It is therefore essentially different from any state we knew before fascism emerged. Then the state was the monopoly of power by the ruling groups, which, however, had to consider the interests and influence of other groups as well. Moreover, there was the traditional weight of the army and the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy especially evolved a

certain independence, guaranteeing continuity even if the social weight of the classes changed. The courts, even if there had been no constitution protecting the rights of civilians, were bound by laws, and the pledge of the state to administer justice was an expression of the belief that no government could persist, in the long run, if it constantly violated the interests of the social groups.

The fascist state made the monopoly of power absolute and has exerted it ruthlessly. It refused to acknowledge the existence of special interests. By extolling the state above everything and claiming unrestricted subordination of all else to the state, it forged a powerful weapon with which to fight any potential opposition and destroy those social groups which might try to assert themselves.

The fascist regime not only increased the power of the state in order to establish more firmly its own position—pretending to further the common good and the highest values—but its ideology gained a special dignity. The ruling party at once claimed for itself the traditional authority of the state and the state's aloofness from special interests, which had evolved in modern times. Relying on the inability of the average man to think—especially as no one was allowed to say what he thought—fascism ridiculed “objectivity” as a morbid idea of the bourgeois past, and pretended, at the same time, to represent the true common interest.

It is with the "state" as with "society": the same words are used, carrying the old associations, though the essence has changed. Under the fascist regime the state has become the organ of the party; with its police, its bureaucracy—used to obeying the government—it has systematically broken up every institution that might have been an obstacle to the omnipotence of the ruling oligarchy. This was accomplished in the forms of legality; the whole procedure of law, created to protect the citizen, became the tool of this ruthless oppression which methodically destroyed society.¹ Many were unaware of this revolutionary change, as fascism moved slowly in the beginning and utilized all the institutions of the state. It was years before most people realized the change, and only after the Munich "agreement" did foreign statesmen see that there was no "state" left, as they understood a state.

Everywhere in the western world the state had at least some existence apart from the social structure. Whatever classes were in power, the bureaucracy had evolved a certain pattern of administration; tradition was the great source of authority as well as of pro-

¹ Not the individual, only the community has rights; there is no Magna Charta. The individual has only duties, the violation of which constitutes a crime. The plans for the criminal law foresee the breaking down of the primacy of the individual, and establishment of the superiority of the community. (*Nationalsozialistische Leitsätze für ein neues deutsches Strafrecht*, Part 1, 1935, p. 6.)

rection; and the law, stern and ruthless as it might be, was one of the solid pillars on which social groups and individuals could rely. Especially in the field of foreign policy continuity was unanimously presupposed, and each regime found itself bound by obligations incurred by former governments, or by its own signature. It was a great surprise to the world to see a regime emerge which remained ruthless, in spite of its success; which used the same derogatory, defamatory language against foreign statesmen as against domestic enemies; which changed its attitude and policy according to expediency; which did not refrain from heinous attacks and lies; which introduced the verbiage of mass-meetings into the most official pronouncements. To be sure, Russia had followed the same course, but that after all was bolshevism, and the fascist regimes were still taken as representative of the historical social groups.

Thus the world began to realize that fascism was something different, that there is a new state, a new political regime, another social structure, another way of thinking: but it tried to interpret this new way of life by the old concepts of despotism, tyranny, the leviathan state. None of the concepts explains the special character of fascism. To say that there is a strong state, coercion, oppression, that there is a ruthless oligarchy, does not explain how such a regime can emerge and wield power over a well-educated people, which had been proud of its independent

thinking. This discussion of fascism has shown how masses have become a new, permanent and decisive force, molding the social and mental nature of society, transforming it to a degree that seemed unthinkable in a world which was used to meeting its problems by struggle and compromise on a traditional basis.

Chapter Four

THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN MASSES: GERMANY

A survey of the German situation will prove that National Socialism, even more than Italian fascism, is a regime founded on masses, determined to transform the whole people into crowds, to keep them in emotional tension and to establish a new world in which the values of the past are despised and destroyed. I do not mean to suggest that all the leaders of National Socialism were aware of the foundation on which they built; some of them at least might have had in mind the creation of an "organic state." Others had in mind a utopia in which the common good would precede every egoistic interest. But once

the National Socialist state had begun, the regime was driven step by step to follow the lines of its own mass-movement, changing the whole social order to the amazement of the world, which always believed that a normalization *must* come—despite the fact that the National Socialists themselves insisted that they were revolutionaries, set to destroy bourgeois institutions and values.

This transformation, however, was bound to be a long and complicated process with many setbacks, and the following pages can be only a first attempt to consider German fascism on the basis of the theory expounded in this book.

THE REDUCTION OF GERMAN SOCIETY TO A CROWD

The beginnings of National Socialism have been described often. When Hitler first met the few men with whom he associated himself—the six-man party which he made, by joining, a seven-man party—the future institutions of the mass-party were already in preparation. There was a widespread and deep-reaching nationalistic movement, bent on tearing up the Treaty of Versailles; but this was rather an emotional state which gained strength whenever the economic situation deteriorated, and which subsided during periods of recovery and prosperity. Of greater importance for the future was the existence of the

armed secret societies which played such a decisive role during the period of the plebiscites, and in fighting the communists and opposing the government in its attempt to normalize relations with the allied powers. They were an armed force, enjoying the clandestine support of the army. The official army of the Republic, reduced to 100,000 men, wished to keep contact with its former officers and men, and approved the formation of these secret societies. They were in part terroristic organizations. Their actions appealed to the young generation and stirred the imagination of the public. They kept the old war-like spirit alive and counteracted the pacifist movement that had gained so much strength after the war. But these troops and the veterans' organization, the *Stahlhelm*, were only the background for the development of an entirely new force: the army of the party.

The sporting detachments (*Sportsabteilungen*), later called storm-troops, were an entirely new phenomenon in German party life; and their development was different from that of the Italian black-shirts, who were more closely connected with the army. The S. A., or brownshirts, were the vanguard of the party, and their task was to conquer power by intimidation and overt fighting. They were organized for civil war, but they attained power without much actual fighting. Their first step was to keep opponents at their political meetings silent; they then ter-

rorized meetings of other parties which could be harmful to their cause. Thus they changed the political scene completely. Immediately after the war and for some years following there was much free discussion. Whoever lived in Germany through those years knows that the general public was very much interested in free speech and did not at all long for "commands." It was the formation of the brownshirts which turned every political meeting in Germany into a demonstration; the democratic parties also began to resent discussion of their politics by opponents, since they were prevented from speaking in the meetings of the nationalistic parties.

With discussion ruled out, the political crowd became a permanent institution, whereas formerly it had appeared only casually, quickly disintegrating whenever questions came up for discussion. This point has never been sufficiently emphasized. Foreign observers in particular believed that Germans did not want democracy, that they welcomed this ruthless party regime. Quite the contrary is true: they were taken by surprise when, after Hitler's accession to power, their independent ways of life, of thought, of organization were destroyed.

〈The importance of the storm-troops in preparing the way for dictatorship by shattering the political life of the nation can hardly be exaggerated.〉 The average citizen was impressed by the fact that uniformed troops marched the streets while the state

surrendered, without any resistance, its monopoly of power. To be sure there were the redshirts too, and later the *Reichsbanner* (the Republican guard), but these organizations, especially the latter, were on the defense. They were not militant, and they were not protected by the army. The crowd marched with the National Socialist storm-troops, which appealed to nationalistic emotions; and when the brownshirts insisted on fighting the workers in their own streets, and carried the day, new masses flocked to their colors, attracted by action, energy, the fight, the booty. Thus the storm-troops established a dictatorship on the street, which they dominated after 1930.

The power of the storm-troops proves the efficiency of terrorism. By their display of colors they attracted great numbers to the National Socialist meetings, and by their ruthlessness they kept away or silenced their opponents. Banning discussion from politics was in itself a great victory. The storm-troops thus became the force behind the incessant propaganda. But their real success was in their appeal to the masses: theirs were armed forces which almost everybody could join; troops which could not only boast but also strike, which clashed even with the police and which were treated very leniently by the courts; they had militant songs and very simple but attractive slogans. The glorification of violence and the practice of it were the delight of all those groups which were in despair, which saw no solution for

their private problems, especially the unemployed and the impoverished middle classes. To frighten people and to fill them with enthusiasm: that was the work of the storm-troops which, more than anything else, molded the German people into masses and kept them so. >

It is true that Germans enjoy military display and that they like to march with an army band. But in this they are not very different from the Austrians, who certainly are not militaristic nor bound to fall for a dictator; nor from the Czechs, whose sokols were always very popular, and yet who are neither militaristic nor happy under a strict regime. The Germans, to be sure, march better, and they invented the goose step; but there is military drill in every modern army. What makes the Germans better soldiers is probably their feeling of duty, their way of identifying themselves with the state and the authorities.

This will to obey should not be taken as the expression of a slavlike spirit. It is rather the desire for order, especially in the public sphere—the same desire which makes Germans fond of an efficient organization. The success of the storm-troopers is therefore the more surprising. In fact, many did resent the turmoil created by these “young boys.” But the masses felt that they were called up to action by the storm-troopers, that now they could give way to their passions; mobilization of the masses under the leadership

of the storm-troops became the new feature of political life.

The storm-troops, then, well illustrate that character of the National Socialist regime which is accentuated and maintained by all other institutions in present-day Germany: a strong power and an efficient organization which defies any opposition, and is ready to act and to strike ruthlessly without regard to tradition, established standards or social position. At the same time this authority not only pretends to be but is the mouthpiece of the masses, the amorphous crowds; it waves the flag, it stages spectacles for them, it keeps them in motion and in suspense. These masses are the real basis of the regime, upon which it can fall back at any time.

The masses, of course, must never be allowed to get out of control: too easily other passions might get hold of them and too easily could they turn against their masters. The regime must therefore maintain order even against the masses, if they should break loose. This has led to the misunderstanding that the National Socialists were or might become conservative. The National Socialist Party exerts at times its control over its followers, it "purges" its own movement of dangerous elements which might go too far and disregard the fact that, although the masses are needed as the driving and intimidating force, they must at the same time be carefully controlled. But this psychological paradox is only an

apparent contradiction: crowds venerate the strong man even if he turns against them, provided he leaves some sphere for unbounded action. But masses remain the necessary basis of his regime: otherwise those groups of the population which still do their own thinking might feel the hope of becoming stronger; the old bureaucracy and the older army officers, whatever is left of them, might think that their day is dawning; and the followers of the ruling party might begin to doubt. A regime based on masses must be extremely wary of any seeds of opposition; such a regime, though strong, is unstable and must constantly watch its psychological foundations.

Thus modern fascism has three essential attributes: it is ruthless and terroristic; it creates a sort of enforced order; and, at the same time, it arouses emotions, keeps them burning and satisfies them. This last element is the decisive one, making possible the other two. It is the necessity of dominating the masses that explains the element of order; and it is the necessity of satisfying the masses that explains the ruthlessness and the regulated outbursts.

It is not the purpose of this book to give a detailed analysis of National Socialism; nor is it necessary to prove that it is ruthless. But it might not be superfluous to show how every institution of this state, every feature of its policy, is based on its nature as a mass-movement, inimical to the historical social groups, bent on dissolving western civilization, which

dates back to Greek antiquity. I return therefore to the discussion of the National Socialist organization.

Before National Socialism came into power it had already prepared itself to become a universal organization. The party had evolved all those formations which could later replace the social groups. The Hitler youth, the *Bund der Mädel* (the girls' organization), the organization of professionals, of white-collar workers, of industrial workers, of farmers—all these were formed to be members of the community and to defend or represent their interests within the party. The party itself was all-embracing. It avoided placing its center of weight in any special interest; therefore it made promises to all interests and, to avoid suspicion of rival groups within the party, veiled the promises in clouds of words which sounded to the general public like pure ethics.

When Hitler came into power naïve people, who thought in terms of the past, hoped that the many old and strong organizations, well rooted in ideas, interest and local tradition, would hold their own. In fact, there is hardly a country in Europe in which the autonomous life of the people had found so vivid an expression in unions, associations, fraternities, clubs of all sorts—to an equal degree in all social layers, certainly no less with workers than with merchants and farmers. There existed the very large organizations of uniformed veterans (the *Stahlhelm*), close to the reactionary nationalists (*Deutsch-Nationale*

Volkspartei) and always at loggerheads with the storm-troops. But they were no obstacle to the National Socialist Party: once it availed itself of the monopoly of power, all these centers of might were blown up and after a few weeks nothing was left. This was equally true of the trade unions, the employers' unions, the cultural organizations, the sporting clubs—in short, of everything that was the expression of independent social activity and that offered a formation within which people could communicate on terms and on ideas which they had chosen themselves. In those first months it was not commonly realized what this dissolution of the whole fabric of society signified: not only the annihilation of society, but the reduction of the people to a crowd, a helpless crowd which had to look for leadership. But even if this had been realized no effective resistance would have been waged, as at that time the party already had all means of power at its disposal.

This destruction of all social associations was even more important than the suppression of political parties and as important as the suppression of a free press. The social organizations could have been centers for thinking, for argument, for discussion; they could have kept alive the spirit of independence. As they gradually disappeared—it was years before they entirely ceased to exist, at least in the memory of former members—there was created a vacuum, and even the most monotonous propaganda was swallowed by

people who formerly would have refused to listen to a constant repetition of purely emotional outcries. The National Socialist Party was, from the beginning, the expression of a crowd; Hitler himself realized that he could offer propaganda only to masses,¹ that he could win and keep power only if he reduced the whole people to a crowd. And that he did. That has been the secret of his success and the explanation of his policy.

Nothing illuminates the nature of National Socialism as clearly as its destruction of society and its emphasis on propaganda. Thus was the situation of a crowd firmly established; and this explains why ruthless violence was a success with a people which had been proud of a decent and just government, a government by law even under absolute monarchs. Now the controls of the subconscious were broken and the way opened for destruction of the spiritual and ethical inheritance of centuries.

ECONOMIC POLICY OF THE GERMAN MASS-STATE

The National Socialist policy is a very interesting and, it may be, a momentous new development in government. The strict order it established, its totalitarian character, its regulation of the private citizen's life in every respect are not in contradiction to its being a

¹ See Appendix VI.—Ed.

state of the masses. In fact, many believe it is the reawakening of old despotism. But that is only a half-truth. Let us review the nature of an order in which regulation and discipline are blended with the free reign of violent outbursts in which not only the ruling oligarchy but also the masses are allowed to indulge.

The National Socialist economic policy aimed from the outset at complete control of production and distribution by the state under the leadership of the party. In fact, all measures were derived from this intention. Recovery was not so much the aim as full employment. Thus the government began with public spending, but was resolved to keep wages down to the depression level. It is not certain whether this was done in order to prevent disputes between employers and workers, which could have revived the activities of trade unions, or to protect the government from the attacks or enmity of the employers. It might well be that public works, especially armaments, were already planned on a gigantic scale, and an increase in wages, and hence in consumption, would have absorbed too much of the productive power of the country, and especially too large a part of the imports. Thus restrictive measures prevented from the outset any increase in individual wages, or any rapid increase in aggregate wages and aggregate consumption, inasmuch as a large number of formerly unemployed workers were forced to work for very low wages, especially in road building. Public spending

proceeded on a large scale, with prices kept without difficulty at a low level. The economic functioning of this system was not due to the devices of a wizard; it can be explained on the basis of a typical market-economy which is kept within certain limits by a stern and ruthless authority. A short analysis of this is given later in this chapter (pp. 114 ff.).

The psychological side of this policy, however, is not always sufficiently stressed: it cannot be denied that the huge profits and the power exerted by the entrepreneurs are the main roots of radical opinion within the working masses, who cannot analyze the social system but on whom the social contrasts make, and have always made, the deepest impression. Socialism as a mass-movement of workers and middle classes is certainly rooted in the desire for justice and to some extent in resentment. Greater equality of income, better rewards for labor, are goals for which the workers fight; but the dissatisfaction of the wage earners would be much less if, with full employment, profits and incomes of the entrepreneurs were generally low.

National Socialists, being leaders of a mass-movement, realized more than socialists ever did to what extent people are filled with envy, with hatred for the rich and the successful; and they applied double tactics. On the one hand they pretended that the class struggle, the difference of interests between entrepreneurs and workers, does not exist, that in fact a "com-

munity of the people" is possible and must be created at once; they argued away the tenets of socialism and the functions of trade unions. On the other hand they satisfied the lowest and meanest passions, envy and resentment, by pressing the employers into the labor front, by making them march and stand with the workers for hours on the first of May, and by exerting pressure on the entrepreneurs in cases where principles were not involved, and where the entrepreneur had no good standing with the party. The full power of the state and of its propaganda machinery was used in order to elevate the position of the workers. They were told that their honor, the social esteem they enjoyed, was the highest. Although in the beginning this ideology might have met with the skepticism and sarcasm of the workers—and especially the workers' wives, who had to make ends meet—it began to exert influence with its constant repetition and the quick increase in employment. The first and greatest promise had been that unemployment would be conquered—and the masses were not aware that the National Socialist policy of public spending was the same as that which had been suggested by the trade unions, while keeping wages down would have been opposed by the unions on the basis of a primitive purchasing power theory. Now only the success was seen. The masses did not notice, at least in the beginning, the sacrifices they had to make—thus confirming the cynical opinion that obedience and hard work are gladly

accepted if only greater security is offered as compensation. As keeping wages down was accompanied, in some conspicuous cases, by harsh treatment of entrepreneurs who believed that they were masters in their shops, the workers were led to believe that some of the main tenets of socialism were in fact more nearly achieved than under the lenient capitalistic regime of the Republic.

For the German worker socialism meant always the state. But the high, almost metaphysical value attributed to the state rested, for the worker, not in its being the substantiation of the world-spirit, but in the order it guaranteed. The opposite to this order was anarchy, the inevitable result of the state's weakness. It would be alien to the German mind to assume a spontaneous harmony. The philosophers in Germany were always attracted by the mirage of an independent individual, but they also took for granted an order set by the state and enhancing a freedom of the spirit which could not be hampered or fettered by the strict system of laws. Freedom for them was mainly freedom to think and to believe, but on this earth order was more important, disorder unbearable and never compensated by freedom. This has certainly been the attitude of the average man, and thus socialism was always meant to be such an order guaranteed by the state. The idea of a "withering away" of the state never took root with the German worker any more than did syndicalism. Sabotage, for instance, would

have been repulsive and revolution always meant the establishment of a new order rather than the destruction of the old, which appealed to the Roman peoples. There was no anarchistic strain in German socialism. A personality like Stirner could never become really popular, and the Marxist criticism of the depression exerted by anarchy on the market appealed to everyone. For the same reasons the masses of German workers were never communist; what appealed to them was the very orderly and bureaucratic type of German trade unionism. After more than four years of a devastating war, the representatives of the German soldiers and workers elected to the workers' and soldiers' councils (called soviets) were mainly old trade union people, and the central council of these soviets—the highest authority in Germany until the National Assembly convened in March 1919—was a committee of old Social Democrats. It was only the disintegration of social order by the runaway inflation that radicalized the workers; and the Communist Party recruited its adherents during the depression from the masses of unemployed workers and white-collar workers. Despair and not a revolutionary spirit was characteristic of this period, and the same workers who then hailed the communists later accepted a regime that restored full employment, even though with a low standard of living.

The National Socialist determination to eliminate unemployment was met at first with incredulity, but

when the gigantic program of public works began to reduce idleness, it seemed the creation of a new order. The restrictions of freedom involved were hardly noticed; and the huge expenditures met no criticism from industry, as the firm hand of the state was behind them, ready to strike at any opponent. Moreover, German industry always expected the decisive dangers to arise from the demands of workers—and now the workers could do no harm.

The revival of the German economic system, the increase in its production and employment above former levels, has been hailed in Germany as the work of the Führer, the result of his will power and determination to act while democracies drift helplessly. Abroad it has been represented mainly as the result of a shrewd technique and a policy devised by the "wizard," Dr. Schacht. In this case propaganda and the general habit of looking at the economic process from the monetary rather than from the commodity point of view brought about a world opinion admiring a policy which was based on continuing poverty and which therefore could easily avoid the problems arising from increasing wealth and increasing efficiency.

The tremendous idle reserves of capital equipment and labor were quickly set to work with the help of short-term credit. This device caused anxiety among bankers and economists, who have always watched extension of short-term credit by the central bank

with uneasy forebodings. In this case, however, it did not herald an inflation, because the fixation of wages and prices prevented an increase in the price and wage level as well as the pump-priming effect of these expenditures. Thus everything went smoothly. The number of workers increased, the aggregate consumption was kept within narrow limits, profits increased because of better utilization of capacity and savings increased; on this basis the tax receipts went up, the huge contributions to unemployment insurance were also used by the state and the savings were invested in public loans.

Official statistics are no reliable guide as far as wages and the cost-of-living index are concerned, but they give a good account of the extent to which armaments were financed without influencing the price level. In 1937-38 the aggregate tax receipts were 14 billion reichsmarks, compared with 6.6 billion in 1932-33 and with 9 billion in 1928-29; in 1938-39 receipts were 17 billion reichsmarks. Savings amounted in 1938 to about 10 billion, or 11 billion if we include social insurance. In 1938 the state was able to spend without any inflationary effect almost 25 billion reichsmarks, at least 70 percent of which was for armaments. Public expenditures were about 35 percent of the national income, and 24 percent of the national income was spent on armaments—probably more than that, as the huge investments for the

four-year plan led to a considerable increase of additional spending, financed by short-term loans.

While in other countries, especially the United States, expenditures of this relative magnitude would have led to a great increase in wages and probably also in private investments, the flow of money into these channels was blocked in Germany. But, as public expenditures continued to absorb the flow of money, there was no letdown in production. The main problem became, with expanding expenditures, not the employment but the supply of labor and capital; the working day had to be lengthened, and it is doubtful whether the necessary replacements of equipment were made. As far as there were dangers of inflation, a moderate restriction of armament expenditure could remove them.

The same policy of keeping down wages helped in reducing imports of food. In Germany an increasing real income always tended to induce greater expenditures for imported fruit, butter, etc.; now the imports of food, though very urgent in view of poor crops, could be kept within limits which did not impair the influx of raw materials for armaments.

How was this policy made palatable to the masses? The power of propaganda showed itself again in this case, and in addition some real advantages were offered to the workers. In the first years of the depression trade unions had harped only on the purchasing-power argument and had objected to changes in the

wage scale, thereby alienating the unemployed, who saw the volume of employment shrinking; but the trade unions could not prevent a rapid decline in wage rates (which declined farther than the costs of living) while unemployment still increased. They could not check the disintegration of the workers' ranks and the general deterioration, as they had no power of enacting a work-creation policy.

The National Socialists did have a work-creation policy, and the fixation of wages seemed no disadvantage at a time when a further decline in wages threatened. The solidarity of workers was appealed to, and successfully. Formerly it had been the unemployed who were called upon by the trade unions not to accept jobs unless the employers were ready to pay wages according to collective agreements; the trade unions had not realized that this solidarity could not stand heavy long-lasting unemployment. Now the contrary note was struck, and the employed were asked to prove their solidarity with the unemployed by accepting lower wages. As this policy was coupled with an energetic increase in purchasing power, it could work; the avalanche of increasing production was paid for by public expenditures.

There can be no doubt, therefore, that at least in the beginning National Socialist economic policy was appropriate to the situation; deliberate deficit-spending was resorted to. The masses were satisfied: they had become tired of waiting, and resented the

endless discussions without action. Trade union leaders had lost contact with the masses, as they controlled or influenced only the employed workers, and they had even resisted, in the interest of their members, all measures of co-operative self-help ("production for use") which might have appealed to the imagination. They had not realized that frustration of the masses was the great danger; and that the labor reserves could be mobilized, even at wages no higher than the dole, provided it was done in the right way, by showing the vision of a new world. This was true especially in Germany, where work is considered to be a boon, and where the only obstacle to unleashing the pent-up reserves of labor at a low wage or even at no compensation at all was the unwillingness to work for the profit of the entrepreneurs. The National Socialist regime understood this well, and coupled it with vehement attacks and even maltreatment of old trade union leaders, who had been considered by the communists and the unemployed as traitors to the workers' cause.

That this policy should have met with the enthusiastic approval of all employers, who did not anticipate their own predicament, goes without saying; the same holds true of the farmers, the middle classes, the white-collar workers. For all of them the suppression of the trade unions seemed to mean an increase of their power. The ruthlessness and cruelty of these measures were hailed by all these groups,

which had already been transformed into potential masses, desperate, hungering after action and glad to release their emotions against victims who could not hit back, and whom they considered the cause of their disaster. Thus the regime, with its slogan of the common good, mobilized all the instincts of class hatred against the workers' organizations. In addition it appealed also to the unemployed, who were made to believe that an era of social radicalism was about to dawn. The agitation of the communists against the trade unions, though based on an ideology opposite to that of the National Socialists, was also a very important factor in the success of this policy. The destruction of the trade unions then made it easier to dissolve the independent organizations of other groups.

On the one hand the National Socialist regime provided some substitutes which satisfied real necessities, while at the same time it reinforced the hold of the party over the workers. The "Strength through Joy" organization, offering travel abroad and within Germany, theatrical performances, concerts and so on, all served to organize the leisure time of workers and to make sure that they were exposed to the "right" influences. They were given the satisfaction of being offered the same opportunities as the rich, while they were prevented from being untutored, or left with their thoughts groping for dangerous ideas. This organization is a very good example

of the ingenuity of the National Socialist leaders: after the destruction of the genuine, autonomous institutions that had developed in Germany from olden days, the regime knew how to build up something new which served the purpose of control, could be used for propaganda and become one of the innumerable tentacles with which the masses were grasped and held. The same holds true of the labor front, in spite of the opposition it found, of the labor service, of the youth organizations; all these institutions and formations won the masses by breaking down the border lines between the social groups. Paradoxically, class antagonism was utilized for the destruction of the social and political power of the classes, and masses everywhere were institutionalized, releasing their emotions and preventing any potential opposition.

It must be realized that in this way everything came within the grasp of the state, and hence of the party. But it would not have remained there; it would have led to bureaucratization and dullness, followed by disappointment and psychological disillusionment within the ranks of the National Socialists themselves, had it not been for the violence, the fervor and the emotional element within a policy which both intimidated potential opponents and aroused the enthusiasm of the masses.

Whichever of the various problems of economics and politics we analyze, we find the same pattern.

Although some of the measures met open or secret resistance in the beginning, the power of the party behind them guaranteed their enforcement, and official propaganda ensured their emotional appeal. The self-sufficiency or autarchy policy in agriculture and the four-year plan in industry were deemed unattainable abroad, when they were announced. But this opinion proved to be wrong, because it underestimated not only the power and efficiency of force under modern conditions, but also the strength of the emotional appeal, made overwhelmingly strong by propaganda.

This propaganda could always rely—apart from the passion for violence and energy—on the predatory instincts of the masses. If there was oppression at home, the suppressed and tortured were presented as exploiters, rich idlers, national traitors; if the oppression was in the foreign policy, stress was put on the natural right of expansion or the liberation of suppressed nationals. The propaganda never abated. The masses could hardly cool off and return to a week-day normality. To keep them active and emotionally aroused was the aim of the party and the government. The government was the self-appointed committee of a mass-movement, which by its own instincts moved constantly, always disappointing hopes for “appeasement,” whether at home or in matters of foreign policy. The social sphere was never allowed to “settle down” as that would have meant

real power for social groups: therefore the drive had to continue, the revolution had to be kept alive. It is the most important and conspicuous feature of this regime that it retained, even in its most constructive measures, the character of a mass-movement. This implies an aggressive and dynamic policy, unheard of in history, breaking all traditions and surprising the world by revolutionary attacks in every field.

◀ In a modern state based on masses, foreign affairs will be the center of every action. In this field emotions can be kept alive. An active and offensive policy can easily combat and suppress any domestic opposition, especially if the nation considers itself entitled to aggression. ▶ And this policy presupposes education for war—psychological as well as military training. The psychological education of the whole people for war again paralyzes the social groups and destroys their foundations; it canalizes mass-emotions and keeps them alive. The training for war keeps everyone busy: even the six-year-olds are made to march, to exercise, to concentrate on “war-games” to such an extent that they cease to be mere play and can be turned into grim reality. When a state in which the social structure is strong, and in which conflicting interests dominate the domestic scene, prepares for war, it is difficult to divert enough money, energy and interest for this purpose; the military aspect there is not totalitarian, and can become so only during a war as a consequence of modern technique. But fascism, as a

state of emotional masses, is necessarily at war even when it is nominally at peace; policy may wage war with other means than fighting.

This constant warring prevents the reawakening of thinking and of articulation into social groups. Moreover, it prevents the emergence of social discussion and of problems which belong to another world. In this era of technical progress the tremendous potentialities of modern production cannot fail to create enormous problems of social adjustment. The distribution of income, wealth and power; the frictions of economic growth—these are problems of every modern society, especially of democratic societies. With the whole economic system turned to production for private use and enterprise, real wages and incomes of workers and of the middle classes would have to rise quickly; increasing income and security, attainable only with successful planning, could not fail to make for a more independent life; without expenditures for armaments, which keep the country in a strait jacket, international trade could be free and there would be no need for currency control; travel abroad with all its possibilities for contagion could hardly be prevented over a long period; a forty-hour week would contribute to leisure and create new dangers. If, on the other hand, planning were not successful, depression and unemployment would return. With armament as the main purpose the economic system can run at full speed; it is as in the fairy tale,

where the runner uses only one foot lest he circle the globe in a few hours and always overreach his destination. The public expenditures steady the economic course and provide the burden of work and the outlet for production without which the strict discipline of a whole people and the sinister suppression of every free movement would be impossible.

THE "PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY"

National Socialist policy tries to control the dynamic and perhaps explosive forces of society; at the same time it harnesses and keeps in action the explosive forces of the masses. It tries to destroy the source from which society could again emerge: individual thinking. And it keeps in motion the hectic and ferocious energy of the masses without which the regime would lose its self-confidence, its power and its appeal.

Bureaucracy is one of the dangers by which every political regime is threatened: the spirit evaporates, the older officials cling to their positions, the influx of young men is restricted mainly to careerists and adherents and the daily routine cuts off the ties with the public. Under these conditions the influence of the opposition grows and the way is prepared for a change in power.

A totalitarian regime is also faced with these dangers of bureaucratization. In a country like Germany,

where order is a principle of public life, the destruction of the old must follow the "due process of law." Therefore, once the party was established in power the legal order was completely changed; even the old rights of officials to their positions, in some cases to their pensions, were canceled on the basis of new laws giving full power to the administration to do whatever it wanted. But even this wholesale upheaval, the influx of party members into office, mainly into the political positions, was made a legal procedure. The new elements merged with the old. The complicated machinery of a modern state cannot be run by outsiders. The old officials had to be kept, and there was the danger that the intruders would be submerged in routine work. This was obviated by the party's domination in all general decisions, the execution of which, however, was left to the old bureaucracy, which had to comply with the new principles. The regime did not make the mistake of leaving any substantial power to the old departments, nor did it break up the old efficient machinery. It met little obstruction or opposition and almost no sabotage: undoubtedly the resolution to execute the new policy by force, and if need be by the elimination of those who resisted, was sufficient to ensure complete obedience. The dismissal of many conspicuous and faithful officials, from whom resistance might have been expected, contributed to this success.

In the course of the following years the task of

both the administration and of the bureaucracy increased. The National Socialist Party built up its own staff; corresponding to every government department it created an office within the party with which the leading government officials had to keep in touch and consult. The influence of the armed party organizations was equally felt. There are no statistics nor any budget published, but competent observers report that this organization is tremendous. It is natural that decisive steps concerning administrative changes and turns in policy emanate from the party, which is not yet identical with the administration. Here again the ruthlessness of the party, its determination to strike and its presence everywhere prevent any potential opposition. This character of the party leadership proves that it never "settles down," but keeps alert and in contact with the masses of its followers. It never allows their emotions to be dissatisfied or disappointed. And so far there is no tendency toward bureaucratization, as had been expected by the historical layers of society even after the destruction of their power.

Within the state the all-pervasive presence of the party as the exponent of the masses has made it possible, by the monopoly of education and power, to paralyze and absorb even the oldest nonparty institutions—a process which is not yet finished, but which is well under way. The most important stages of this dissolving influence are the struggle with the churches

and the transformation of the army into a party institution. In this process the character of the National Socialist regime becomes clearly visible. There can and will be no compromise; the ruling party is stronger because it can call out the masses which are accessible only to the official power of the state.

In National Socialist ideology all this means the emergence and victory of the "people's community." But it is obvious that such a community and unity cannot and does not exist in daily life; that it is ridiculous to assume a permanent continuation of the excited enthusiasm that may possess a crowd in action. The absence of social groups and of discussion makes crowds the only social phenomenon; and the party organization is kept, psychologically and actually, in the same condition, inasmuch as no stratification nor any free development is permitted. Thus the forward thrust of the "radical wing" is made necessary—the nature of the party, as masses, does not permit compromise. Any comparison with other parties or regimes fails.

The great problem then is whether this state of mind can persist, psychologically. There is no historical experience that can help us in our judgment. Comparison with the Mohammedan thrust against the western world is not adequate. What is intended in Germany is the transformation of modern man into a mass-being. It is attempted by creating and constantly maintaining crowd-psychology in the people,

and by educating the youth on lines which make them unfit to appreciate their individual lives or to be interested in their private destinies. No one can tell whether or in what way the individuals might awake to their own consciousness, or whether this reawakening would culminate in an all-pervasive psychic crisis. It is through such a crisis, especially within the leading groups of the party, that a turn could be expected. We cannot assume that the older people will reassert themselves and gain influence—just the opposite has happened throughout the last six years. Nor can we reasonably anticipate a rallying of young people who have been educated in National Socialist principles against the tenets of the regime.

The great revolutions of the past were preceded by the growing popularity of new ideas; they were shared by a few people in the beginning, but they made their way because they expressed the spirit of a new epoch and could influence a wide public through many channels. It has been said that revolutionary ideas can never be prevented from spreading. That is true in general. But they cannot take possession of minds which have been inculcated with other ideas, and they can be fought not only with ideas but with propaganda and with force. The most powerful way of fighting them is to create men who conform to another ideal, upon whom ideas cannot exert their influence. Thus it is very unlikely that within a "mass-state" the idea of liberty, or of indi-

vidual independence, or of a world continuously moving and changing its nature, could spread and become a power—the regime will always try to keep the masses in emotion and in action and the weak seeds of other thoughts will be dispersed. It is necessary to realize this situation in order to avoid the illusions which are so frequent, especially in democratic countries. Many still believe that the old ways of thinking—nay, the ways of any thinking—exist in a mass-state; they still count on the remnants of old organizations, such as the church or the army; they still believe that the social groups, the entrepreneurs, the farmers are alive and may reassert their influence. But all these belong to the past.

The mass-state is always vigilant. It realizes the power of ideas and is always ready to fight them; it does not make the mistake of taking the opposition lightly, either at home or abroad. It tries to popularize and to spread mass-movements of its own type everywhere, well knowing that the very existence of a living society in the world is a threat to its own continuation.

It is a threat, because it demonstrates the existence of free men in the world; this form of social life may prove superior and one day democracy, realizing the danger of being overthrown, may defend itself. This fight would be long and bitter, and it is very doubtful whether a totalitarian power could stand such a fight. The same people who make the most ruthless

and cruel officers in times of peace, and who revel in the sadism in which they can indulge in concentration camps, are not the best fighters in the trenches. In such a fight the masses might realize what they have lost, and a mutiny might easily grow into a revolution. Therefore we must expect the most insidious propaganda within the democracies, for as long as the democracies are kept in a state of paralysis and fear, the latent threat of opposition within the mass-state cannot break into the open.

A dictatorial regime based on masses is afraid of nothing more than of seeing the enthusiasm of its supporters die down. We have already seen that psychologically there is no normalization in such a state. But there is another side to the question. It is that the masses not only suggest to and enforce upon the dictator a policy of violence, of emotion, of great words and of hazardous deeds, as was probably the case with Mussolini, but that the opposite is also true. Mass-emotions usually subside sooner or later; the fact that in revolutions, after the conquest of power, the masses are dismissed with very little or no resistance is a proof of this statement. It is very likely that many who join the crowds in revolutionary times soon realize that they do not belong there. They feel ashamed that they forgot themselves; they do not recognize themselves in their actions; the old ideas of rationality, humanity, decency get hold of them; they

relapse into their social group, their family. It is the specific feature of the modern dictatorship that it keeps the nation in the crowd-state. The crowd-psychology must always continue. That they can do this is owing to the fact that the leaders themselves are mass-men, or people who find their real fulfillment in being part of the masses. They conform to the masses in hating impartial deliberation, in preferring action to negotiation and compromise, in denying complicated problems and "cutting through the knot."

It is on this psychological basis that the fascist parties have been built up. With their success they attract active mass-men who then are kept in a state of emotion and cannot return to their former ways of life. Even family cohesion is broken, the pulverization of society is complete. Masses make dictators, and dictators make masses the continuing basis of the state.

Chapter Five

SOCIETY AND SOCIALISM

Society has always been articulated—it has consisted of many social groups with their own ideas, interests and weight in the community. Domination of some social groups by others has not prevented their existence and their contribution to the course of events. The domination, of course, can range from the exertion of a powerful influence on or even control of the government to sheer tyranny. But even a strict domination, even tyranny, has not meant the destruction of society. Thus the path of history was always kept open. The preceding chapters have shown how the transformation of society into masses leaves mankind faced with the threat of being lost, as every individual

is in danger of losing his past, of being thrown as a particle into masses where he must forget that the western world was built upon the emancipation of the human mind.

Hitler's boast that he will build a thousand-year empire in which nothing will change, that the ideas on which it rests are eternal, is a very serious threat. A mass-state does not permit of any dynamic spirit. It permits only dynamic action, while the "ideas" behind it—conquest, power—are always the same. Also unchanging are the means of keeping in power: violence, regimentation, drill and destruction of every independent organization of groups or interests. Perhaps even individual poverty is essential in a system which must fear nothing more than the reawakening of the individual, because it has no way of embracing independent thinking and liberty.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MODERN SOCIALISM

The emergence of the mass-state makes necessary a revision of ideas on society and social evolution developed during the nineteenth century. These modern ideas can be traced back to political movements of the eighteenth century, when emancipation of the individual was the main goal; this emancipation meant to the revolutionary spirit of the time the victory of nature and humanity over the sinister power of ty-

rants. There was the church, suppressing freedom of thinking, and the still powerful feudal state, keeping the subjects, both peasants and middle classes, under a heavy yoke. The political philosophy of the time was based on the inalienable rights of individuals, and the state was interpreted as a contract among independent sovereign individuals. What seemed, however, to be the political and economic emancipation of the citizen, who had long ago begun to indulge in free, independent thinking, was really the appearance of a new class which, in co-operating and fighting with the old historical classes, built up modern society.

This new society had been prepared on the Continent by the French Encyclopedists in the eighteenth century. Their ideas seemed dangerous; the criticism of the historical hierarchy and the pronouncement of equality were not acceptable in a feudal society. But on the other hand economic development depended upon the bourgeois class; the increasing expenditures of the state depended upon increasing wealth of the cities; the population could not yet be made to work directly for the regime. Wherever feudal interests collided with new ideas they had to tolerate them, as the new ideas were inextricably fused with the new ways of production and of trade—the sources of wealth.

Emancipation of the individual was the great political idea, and also the force that helped mold the basic concepts of the social sciences. The state was

represented as a contract among sovereign individuals; the ideal economic system was based on the rational, independent action of individuals who produce and sell in a world of free competition and free trade. Though economists realized that such a world never had existed and never could exist, they proposed the closest possible approximation to it, in the interest of the common good. The less the individual was restricted, the greater production, wealth and welfare would be. The detrimental effects of perfect competition, the shortcomings of an economic system that could not develop harmoniously without some sort of control, were minimized. There was the individual—he was a world for himself, and his action, in conjunction with the actions of all his fellow citizens, would lead to a state of economic equilibrium, just as the co-existence of sovereign states would lead to political equilibrium. Thus in an epoch of the greatest revolutionary changes, brought about by the impact of new social groups upon the historical powers, this whole new society, still further complicated by the formation of the proletariat and its problems, was ushered in under the flag of the independent individual. This new individual was natural and therefore eternal. He had always existed, but he had been suppressed; now he was free and could prove his worth; he could establish a world system which would be better and would also be eternal. Bourgeois society also considered itself as final—as every social system does.

But poverty and injustice did not disappear. With the growth of industry and the destruction of old crafts, which swelled the ranks of the proletariat, and with the quick increase in population resulting from increased efficiency in production and improved technique—especially the technique of lengthening the average span of life—the old ideas of socialism, of greater equality and social peace, reappeared. It was recognized that the problems of the modern era cannot be solved by individual action. How could the worker's situation be improved by his own better adjustment, as he was clearly the object of forces much greater and stronger than he? The "independence" of the individual entrepreneur was also disclosed as a fallacy. Society returned to thinking on economic problems as an *a priori* necessity.

Utopian socialism, however, was based on the moral conversion of the individual. It was rationalistic and tried to convince both the enlightened and the simple uncorrupted mind: everyone should be able to grasp its truth. Human nature would awake to itself in a well-organized, rational and harmonious order, in which exploitation of all sorts would be absent, equality would be restored and the natural virtues of man would reign. The difference from the eighteenth-century concept was that co-operation should replace competition, solidarity be substituted for egoism.

This new society would not consist of social groups, which would disappear with the inequalities

of individuals. There would remain, naturally, differences of social functions; but these would not be sources of social or political power in a world which was to be harmonious and easygoing, a world of eternal peace. Utopian socialism had very little to say about the way in which it would come to be realized. It hoped that small-scale experiments would prove the superiority of the new society; that the success of such communities, their happiness and efficiency, would persuade statesmen, church authorities and millionaires to join a universal and world-wide social action to transform a society torn by strife into the ideal state. Neither revolution nor force seemed necessary.

MARXISM: THE CLASS STRUGGLE AND THE CLASSLESS SOCIETY

Marxism has only the general goal in common with this utopian socialism. The utopian socialists were dreamers; Marx was a revolutionary who had experienced the resistance of political powers to even the smallest reforms. They were rationalists, believing in the eternity of reason: a truth can be proved to everyone and, once proved, must be accepted. Marx was a historian and recognized the deep foundation of interest and its influence on the human mind. The utopians had a simple and optimistic philosophy, applicable to any situation, reducing the world's destiny to the so-

lution of a mathematical and moral problem equally easy to conceive and to handle. Marx, on the other hand, had wholly absorbed Hegelian philosophy, and to him the ideal society could be reached only through a long process full of danger and catastrophe, in which thinking and practical measures, philosophy and politics, were but various sides of the same entity. But at the end of this spiritual, economic and political revolution Marx also visualized the abolition of the social groups, the classes, thus ending exploitation and domination and opening the door to an eternal harmony. There is not much difference between this and the goal of utopian socialism, except that Marx saw modern industry with its mechanization as the basis of the good life for everyone, while the older utopian socialists believed people would prefer a simple and natural existence to the luxuries of civilization.

On the basis of our experience since the World War, the most important point about older social theory is that, whatever its other aspects, it did not realize the fundamental importance of stratification, of articulation as the basis of society in any system. Marxism, as a theory of capitalism and capitalistic society, contributed much to the understanding of history which had formerly been interpreted mainly in terms of ideas and their conflicts. Marxism made the class struggle the cornerstone, but the outlook it gave of a classless society was decidedly utopian and somewhat empty.

According to Marxian social theory the driving force of history, domestic as well as world history, is the class struggle. The great historical epochs are determined by the fight for power; but the fight for political power at home and abroad is only a surface phenomenon. The secret purpose behind all the fights and wars is economic interest, wealth, riches. And the world is now in the last stage of this struggle, in the fight between the capitalist class and the proletariat.

Classes in Marxist theory are of an ambiguous nature. They represent the dynamic forces in history. Every class has its function in history, and its rule is therefore a necessary step on the way. It develops natural resources on the basis of a technique that is related to its social nature ("Feudalism is handloom; capitalism is steam-power"). The ruling class, however, not only drives forward to a technically higher level, but also gives the keynote for the ideas of the time.

It is one of the greatest contributions of Marxist sociology that it pointed out to what an extent thinking is dependent upon what the man in the street holds to be the "real world." Current ideas are disclosed as ideologies, carrying no final truth but only a time-bound interpretation of the world. This relation between ideas and reality or truth and reality is very complicated. The interests of the classes are economic interests, but economic interests are dependent upon the whole social and political structure. Social

as well as political organizations and institutions can have a firm grasp on the public only if the whole scale of values—the prevailing moral concepts, the social esteem of the various groups, the concepts of just and unjust, the world outlook, even religion—is compatible with the existing social order, and especially with the interests of the ruling classes. The relation, of course, is not always direct and there is considerable leeway; furthermore there is tradition, which accounts for a long survival of ideas and opinions rooting in an older historic epoch. But by and large the dependence exists. Nobody will deny this relationship; it is obvious that life, the whole of social and economic relations, is the substance of our spiritual existence also, and that there is no thinking nor any evaluation, no expression of our existence by art, which can float in the air, independent, unrelated. Whatever the primary source of our civilization might be, or even if no primary source can be singled out, the social classes and their impact cannot be overlooked in the development of our civilization, be it in ethics, science or art.

To Marxist sociology this needs no proof, nor does it to modern sociology in general. The social classes are, then, the main productive agents, and their influence, be it creative or destructive, is decisive. As our thinking is conditioned and determined by our interests; so our social and economic function, the life of our spirit, its problems and its work, rest on a real-

ity which is primarily social. Taking the sociological approach seriously means acknowledging not only the fundamental restrictions and deviations imposed on us, as far as we belong to a social group, but also that there would be no substance nor any mental process thinkable in a social vacuum. Just as a social class following up its interests is a driving force in economic expansion, thus fulfilling an historical mission, so does it give content, color and direction to the human mind in its search for truth.

This is a philosophical problem beyond the scope of this essay. It might be remarked, however, that we can hope to strive for objective truth even though we are aware of the restrictions and the coloring of our thinking. In social analysis also, where the influence of our social position is the greatest, we can hope to discover the secrets of this phenomenon of which we are both subject and object. Surveying the road along which the human mind has advanced during the last centuries in the fields of society—in social psychology, economics, history—we cannot fail to acknowledge the approach to fundamental insight. In this mental struggle the incentive and the motive power may have come from the social groups, but even if there was a bias in posing and working the problems, it helped to elucidate special aspects which were thus not lost, but contributed to the work of later generations.

This emphasis on the productive power of social groups and of classes is necessary in view of the one-

sided notion frequently attributed to the concept of class struggle. That there are various classes—active and dynamic groups, always alert to improve their position, to gain in strength and in power—is inherent in the nature of society, which cannot exist without them. There are, to be sure, dangerous phases in this process, disrupting the continuity of social life. In general, however, these phases are short, and are followed by others in which compromises between the conflicting interests are more or less easily reached. These periods of struggle are very fertile in ideas and discoveries, while the subsequent calmer periods are times of adjustment and elaboration of problems already engendered.

If we realize that truth is a process in which mental and social forces are interwoven in constant interaction, it is only a step toward the hypothesis that this articulation and stratification is necessary to the existence of society. An unstratified society would become either a religious community or emotionally driven masses. What else could it be, with all partial interest and the rich contribution of groups eliminated? The idea of a classless or of an unstratified society is empty. It lacks that tension which is life. It is an idyl, old as the dreams of mankind, and tedious as all idyls if we must live in them. It is rather agitating to see that even revolutionary Marxism, with all its realism and its pitiless analysis of our present historic period, should envisage a solution of all prob-

lems which would do away not only with conflicts, but with all the energy that emanates from them.

The gigantic organization of the mass-state which may replace articulated society with all its various group influences would not lack a certain degree of social action, inasmuch as the various functions within it would make for some grouping. Decentralization of administration and decision could compensate to some extent for the absorption of independent groups. But in the light of our experience it is unlikely that this organization would be possible without the coalescence of what was formerly society into masses, the existence of which might prove to be even more explosive than the antagonism between classes. Whether this danger has been clearly visualized or not, it is certainly significant that discussion in the economic as well as in the political field has shifted, since 1930, from the problem of wholesale socialization to that of how to achieve a full utilization of productive resources and at the same time to maintain personal liberty. In the western countries the idea of a wholly state-administered economic process has been more or less silently abandoned; the question whether farmers, small-scale industry and commercial enterprises should or should not be expropriated was never clearly answered. Now the general opinion is, if I am not mistaken, that even in a system of planned economy the control of large-scale industry would be sufficient, and other planning measures (concerning cur-

rency, interest rates, etc.) would have to be general, without impairing private business in these sections of the economic system.

Behind this change in opinion there is a fundamental alteration in general conditions: a hundred years ago it was the scarcity of capital and, in this country, the smallness of the population, which temporarily slowed down the rate of growth compared with what it might have been. On the average the demand for productive factors far outran the supply, hence the tendency toward a quick accumulation of capital and, in Europe, keeping wages down. This accounted for a fierce struggle for another distribution of the national dividend. We witness the same conflict in present-day Russia, where the building up of industry has been made possible mainly by a very low level of real wages, that is, of consumption. But once the industrialization reaches a certain level, the opposite problem of finding outlets for the investment of savings gains precedence. It was years before this fact was recognized in its seriousness, and practical businessmen still have difficulty in seeing it. They fail to realize that under modern conditions a policy capable of solving the problem of the individual businessman must hurt the community, if made general; nor do they see that the partial analysis they make of their own situation does not take into account questions in which the working of the total system is involved. Our time is in need of a new Mandeville, who could

prove conclusively to the layman that public vices, so to speak, are needed to keep private virtues from defeating their own purpose.

In this situation analysis of the economic system changed, and various means for removing the stumbling blocks in the way of expansion were explored. This analysis nowadays offers opportunities unknown to earlier workers in the field, who translated the idyllic mirage of utopian socialism into the language of a revolutionary philosophy. In the attempt to solve the problem of our time economists have begun to recognize that the main economic results of the Marxist analysis of the capitalistic system have been verified by later developments, but not for the reasons given in his analysis; this, however, does not hold true for his sociological analysis, inasmuch as modern capitalism has not brought about a polarization of society. As the reasons for the long-lasting depression are different from those anticipated in the Marxist analysis, and as the social structure tends to accentuate and increase the number of social groups instead of reducing them and their differences, the Marxist prophecy is dubious.

The situation at present, because of general misunderstandings, is pathetic. The entrepreneurs sincerely believe that the general wage level, the burden of taxation and the quickly increasing public debt are the main dangers, without realizing that the source of all evils is the lack of strong incentive for investment. If

their eyes were not blinded by the social struggle they would see that wealth cannot increase quickly in a capitalistic world like ours; and brief deliberation would show them that, given conditions like those prevailing during the nineteenth century, a high wage level and a great public debt would create such a dearth of capital that interest rates would skyrocket and the mistakes be corrected. But their bias prevents them from drawing the self-evident conclusions which they should derive from everyday experience, such as the tremendous savings of labor as well as of capital implied in modern mechanization technique. They should realize that we are at least in a lull where economic expansion is difficult, and that, this being the situation, reduction of consumption and spending can only aggravate the evil.

The workers, on the other hand, still believe that they are or will be before long the majority of the population; they disregard the existence of the broad middle classes which, if we include at least a part of the white-collar workers, are increasing in numbers. They tend to disregard the differences within the workers' class itself where, at least in the United States, no real solidarity between the various groups exists. They stress with full justification the tremendous productivity of labor under modern technical conditions, which makes disputes about the general wage level ridiculous; but they fail to realize that a different situation prevails with regard to relative

wages. A realistic analysis would show that the main danger to the entrepreneurs is the difficulty of automatic expansion which can be overcome only by concerted social action; and that the main danger to the workers—at least in the present period of history—is that they are feared by the other classes, which are thus lured into a movement that tends to destroy society altogether and with it the pattern without which workers cannot improve their conditions.

THE NECESSITY FOR SOCIAL STRUGGLE

This all sounds like the old melody of harmony between the classes, but it is not. The points of view proposed do not imply the absence of differences between the economic groups, nor do they mean that it is immaterial what class exerts the greatest influence. There are sufficiently great premiums set on winning the economic and political struggle—it is not only personal ambition which is satisfied. The power of a modern state is so tremendous, the means at its disposal so gigantic, that the direction its policy takes has the greatest influence on public welfare. But the contest of ideas and interests rests on the supposition that there can be a social and political struggle, and that a decision can be made in favor of one group without precluding the existence of other groups and their further work and influence. If society continues to

exist, no victory will be final and irreversible. Under these conditions governing might be difficult, but there is no reason why it should be easy.

Political and social tensions have always been productive, though they have frequently entailed social losses. These losses are often exaggerated, although they can be very great. But neither social nor economic and cultural life is interrupted as long as the fundamental basis—coexistence of various social strata—continues, and as long as the various interests and points of view can be presented. Prophecies that certain measures (such as tariff duties, free trade, social insurance) would be deadly blows to the life of the nation in most cases proved wrong because the various interests could either adapt themselves to the new situation or they could, by their pressure, resist and preserve for themselves that place which is necessary for their existence. What does, however, set a limit to the existence of social interests and their influence on the trend of events is the destruction of society and the monopolization of politics by armed masses under the leadership of a party clique ruthless enough to enforce its rule against whatever opposition might arise.

Social struggle is the great agent of life and of what we might term progress. Social peace cannot mean anything but the acceptance over a certain period of the rules of the game. It cannot mean, especially in a dynamic period of history, the absence of friction, of

diversity of interests and their expression; nor can it mean the unrestricted acceptance of orders given by a majority. The function of all the guarantees surrounding the process of lawmaking and the function of the constitution is to establish such rules of the game as will make it extremely difficult and dangerous to break up society.

With this in view it causes rather an uneasy feeling to see the old idea of a golden age maintained as the goal after a successful social revolution. Our recent experience makes it doubtful whether the psychological conditions of an unstratified modern people can be other than those of a crowd, and whether therefore a rational conduct can be expected after the extermination of the classes, or social groups. Socialism, of course, presupposes that all problems are solved by the breaking up of stratification, but this view seems unhistorical and unrealistic. Problems which supposedly could be solved in a classless society—the distribution of income, the growth of the national dividend, the guarantee of employment—are not adequately presented if they are separated from the problem of political freedom, and if the question is omitted whether deliverance to its own mass-instincts does not constitute a danger to mankind compared with which the retardation of progress is of minor importance. Under the conditions of the modern world the real imminent danger is enslavement of ourselves by our-

selves, by the destruction of our best guarantee of freedom, the existence of social groups.

THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

It ought not to be forgotten that socialism is the great movement for the liberation, the emancipation of the workers, primarily in industry. Liberty can only mean freedom to move, to develop, to find one's own way, to speak one's own mind, to have a certain sphere of independence, of sovereignty, of rights. The trade unions, the mother-soil of modern socialism, were organized as much for better wages and shorter working hours as for greater independence and personal freedom in the shop. Freedom, of course, is valueless for the jobless, but it is equally true that security of employment without a certain sphere of sovereign personal rights means enslavement for the workers. It seems to be forgotten by many nowadays that socialism of the nineteenth century meant greater income and greater security of employment as well as a greater sphere of personal rights. No one in western countries, certainly no worker nor intellectual, sought a "dictatorship of the proletariat" which would deprive the "emancipated class" of all its rights for the span of a generation, or for whatever period for which plans can be made. And no one thought that stressing the social against the individualistic element in our

thinking would result in the submersion of every mind in ideology from which there would be no escape.

A dictatorship of the proletariat, like any dictatorship which is meant to be a long-lasting if not permanent political system, must rest upon terrorism and must be the monopoly of power by a political party, that is, by its leading gang. It will, by necessity, destroy society and subjugate everyone. As the dictatorship of the proletariat is not meant as a transitional stage to cope with an emergency, it must in our times transform the population into masses and create a mass-state, just as fascist dictatorships do. There are differences, one of which is that fascism starts from crowds as they offer themselves in periods of a social crisis and that all its methods are based on perpetuating the masses, while communism purports to be the fight of one class against the other under the plan of a certain social and economic structure, based on an elaborated idea. But as a dictatorship must create the conditions necessary for its existence and its continuation, communism is forced on the same way as fascism, and our experience shows that the methods of both systems tend to be the same. And so is the position of the average citizen. A worker in his daily life, his duties, his opportunities will find rather little difference between living under fascism and under communism, once he has reconciled himself to leaving all thinking and all decisions to the authorities and to

feeding on the material and spiritual diet furnished to him.

To repeat, the emergence of the mass-state, not known before the war, makes necessary the revision of all our thinking on society, evolution, revolution and transformation of the economic system. It may be difficult to break with old ideas and to perceive all the consequences of this new phenomenon. It is especially disheartening to recognize that the tremendous dynamic forces, which former generations thought of as the indispensable driving power of social progress, can be distorted and used for the enslavement of mankind and the destruction of civilization. And it might be repulsive to many minds to think of a solidarity binding together all types of social systems, from feudalism to modern democracy, as opposed to the mass-state. But to realize the nature of this state, with destruction as its law of life, should open the way toward a self-assertion of society which must have precedence nowadays over every particular group or class interest. Socialism should also be thought of in terms of society. No one can take a stand against fascism if he advocates the dictatorship of the proletariat as it is understood after the historical example in Russia. Everyone, including the socialists, must realize the sinister dangers slumbering beneath the surface of the modern world. He will then be the more convinced that evolution is the only method of transformation, and stratification the only principle of building a so-

ciety, which can prevent the mass-state and preserve the continuity and the existence of civilization.

But were not the revolutionary way and the classless society always the ideal for which the modern workers' movement fought? This is true, and many millions of young and old throughout the world, and especially in Europe, considered the classless society both desirable and inevitable. No one cared to elaborate on this ideal, because the belief was common that the general trend, if not the details, could be foreseen. The productivity of revolutions in ideas and in creating a new society was a dogma based on former experiences, when revolutions had given birth to or had precipitated the formation of a new society. No one conceived of a mass-state—nor did anyone visualize that a classless society would be very close to a mass-state, hardly distinguishable from it. In discussing the classless society very little attention was paid to the positive functions of social groups, nor was the question discussed of how in a classless society public opinion should develop, what free discussion would mean, in what way government would be carried on.

Socialistic movements in prewar times relied for their concept of the future on two presuppositions which were never questioned. The first of these was that masses (as we now know them) are only an invention of reactionary thinkers; that masses can be and in fact always are led by enthusiasm; that they might be rough in dealing with their enemies, but

they are good-natured, have the best intentions and are a danger only to tyrants, never to humanitarian regimes. The average psychology of the individual poor man, who throughout the world gave so many proofs of his solidarity with his fellow man, was considered to be the psychology of the masses also, in spite of many historical instances to the contrary. The misdeeds of masses, their hysterical outbursts, were taken as the distortions of reactionary historians. Socialists would have admitted at least that there are dangers involved in mere mass-rule, but they would have stressed the great chance to arouse enthusiasm for the good also. This chance certainly exists, but it is only a chance and depends upon the leadership as well as upon the special conditions of the situation. The second presupposition which socialists generally accepted in prewar times was that such masses, composed of poor people, workers, the lower middle classes and farmers, would follow their interests, which were thought to be in the direction of a rationally ordered world where the principle of equality would govern and where there would be no difference between the opinions of the public and the decisions of an enlightened government. In spite of Graham Wallas' warning, the future was expected to follow eighteenth-century rationalism. This is the more astonishing since Marx had unfolded in his historical works the picture of a real world, in which not principles nor interests, but frequently accident, emo-

tion, a special psychology of classes and purely irrational political aims play such a great role. But when the future of society was discussed, it was always the idealized rational and humanitarian beings who were expected to compose the masses.

The great war served to strengthen this view. Pacifism, growing during the four years of warfare, was the opposition of the rational minds of the humanitarians to the useless killing of men. Hope turned toward an era in which decisions would be made not by governments, representing the greed for power and riches of restricted groups, but by the masses, who had been seen during the war to be capable of real human feeling.

As the great groups of society were believed to be led by their interests, and as they were supposed to know—by instinct?—what their well-conceived aims should be, no one conceived of a paralyzation of the group interests. Neither was it considered possible that masses of the population would follow the lead of the upper classes, nor that the upper classes would ever ally themselves with a movement which could endanger their power and wealth. Thus the fascist reality was the great surprise, and has scarcely been recognized in all its special, novel aspects—another evidence of the truth that nothing prevents realistic comprehension of a new situation so much as a frozen pattern of thinking.

Convinced that "the human being is good," all those who hoped for socialism in the future failed to see the dangers involved in the revolutionary transition after the war. There were many socialists, in fact most of them in western lands, who felt rather uneasy about the Russian dictatorship, but after all it was revolutionists and workers in whose name everything in Russia was done, and they could not be wrong. At least they had to be supported against the reactionaries. In this ideological contest between democracy and dictatorship democracy was taken simply as the ideology and disguise of the capitalists and dictatorship as the only sure way of accomplishing socialism. Many even went so far as to interpret this dictatorship as the only real democracy, thus contradicting their own idea that dictatorship is necessary.

During the whole decade from 1920 to 1930 no solution was found for the inner contradiction between bolshevism, with its ruthless dictatorship, and older socialism, with its belief in the rationality of history and in the adequate reaction of every class to its own history, and its conviction that workers throughout the world are the standard-bearers of real democracy. The way to a realistic analysis of the Russian system as well as of the later fascist dictatorships was blocked by the concept of a "classless society." As fascism was certainly not socialism it was believed it must consequently be a capitalistic regime, and its real

character of an institutionalized mass-regime remained hidden. Many within the German labor movement felt this dilemma: to them democracy seemed no way to socialism, as the ruling classes would always block any serious attempt at establishing socialism by their influence on public opinion and, if need be, by violence; yet on the other hand a socialist dictatorship implied a regime which they detested even as a temporary form of government, as they still believed in liberty and the rights of individuals. Thus they decided either for the one or for the other, depending on the general ideas in which they were rooted and their character, but doubted whether both freedom and socialism were reconcilable.

On the basis of our experience during the last few years, we can say that a modern dictatorship must rest on masses and that therefore it will be neither capitalism nor socialism. Capitalism is an economic system which can exist only in a society, while it withers away when the machinery of the state becomes all-powerful and is no longer in communication with the various layers of society. Socialism, on the other hand, is also excluded in a dictatorship which cannot admit of any degree of freedom; the fact that production is planned from above, that depressions and unemployment are avoided through state control of production, does not make socialism if freedom has been destroyed.

THE FUTURE OF SOCIALISM

What then can become of socialism? If we realize that modern dictatorship in an industrial country is equivalent to the destruction of society, we are driven to the conclusion that all economic systems and the types of society which correspond to them are on one side of the fence, while the mass-state is on the other. We can further derive from history the knowledge that society has vitality and elasticity for transformation, and that, as far as economic and social tendencies are strong enough, socialism or a planned economic system can evolve step by step. To say that a gradual and evolutionary development toward socialism is impossible is to disregard reality, which presents in many countries striking examples of a transitory stage in which capitalistic and socialistic elements are fused. It is also to overlook the simple fact that, while the prediction of ever increasing difficulties within the capitalistic system has been proved correct, the insight and the ability to deal with them have also improved—a change which was not foreseen twenty years ago. The participation of the state in economic affairs and the application of methods which have eliminated so many features of what we knew as unbridled capitalism—especially in the oldest capitalistic country, Great Britain—show clearly the wisdom of the Marxian statement that each period of time evolves the ideas

which are necessary in order to cope with its problems.

We can now be confident that we have almost within our grasp the economic and social technique with which we could solve the urgent problems of our time, unleash the potentialities of modern production and assure a standard of living to the workers and lower middle classes which was not dreamed of even by the utopians some decades ago. The resistance against such a policy is certainly very strong, but it may abate if the social groups once realize that they must exist together lest they lose their power and influence altogether and be replaced by a regime which deprives society of all methods of sensible action.

But again, what of socialism? Such a system, though leading to planned production, would not destroy the classes, would not merge them into a classless society. That might seem like betrayal to many socialists and like defeat also to those who, although not socialists, at least resent inequality and hierarchy as such. The classless society was to put an end to the exploitation of men by men; it was to abolish the wage system of slavery, with the advantage to the employer that he is freed of the risk of housing and feeding the worker when there is no work. This view might have been justified in the early capitalistic period; but with trade unions, collective bargaining, unemployment insurance and relief, and with the increasing importance

of co-operative societies and public enterprises, the economic, social and political position of the workers has changed to an extent which no one could have imagined a hundred years ago. The great catastrophe which befell the German workers showed what a long way they had already gone toward winning a decisive social, cultural and economic position: Germany was in fact on the path toward a wholesale transformation of its social system, and this was the main reason why the entrepreneurs supported Hitler, in the hope that he would re-establish a capitalist regime.

The richer a country grows, the stronger the position of the workers is bound to become. With increasing income for the workers, their influence in a democracy will also increase. They might develop a middle-class ideology, petty-bourgeois tastes and ambitions, as could be noticed with the skilled workers in prewar Germany and as can be noticed now in Russia. This fact certainly hurts the illusions of intellectuals who believe in the revolutionary spirit as a concomitant of the wage system. But on the basis of a theory which correlates income and social position with ideologies, it is to be expected that, with increasing efficiency of labor and increasing wealth, the workers go through stages of thinking similar to those of the other social groups. The idea of a homogeneous proletariat was probably never realistic, although in

times when they had neither political nor economic influence the workers united in one party with a revolutionary ideology. This union was preserved only because the socialist parties followed not a revolutionary policy but a policy of reform, in which the various economic layers of workers could support each other. In fact, in practical policy the stratification of workers and employees was always accepted, and the idea of a homogeneous class worked only in the political field.

Lenin in 1902 made the bitter statement¹ that the workers' class, if left to rely on its own power and ideas, would develop only a trade union consciousness, realizing the necessity for concerted action in fighting for its interests against the entrepreneurs and in demanding reform laws; but that would not be socialism. This view of Lenin's is more realistic than that of Marx, who believed that the workers would be formed into great armies by the factory system itself, disciplined and spiritually developed, and become the revolutionary cadres of all the exploited classes of society.

Now, more than ninety years after the Communist Manifesto was written, the situation has developed far beyond the problems of that time. The basic lines of Marxian thought prove to be correct, but they lead

¹ Quoted by Arthur Rosenberg, *Geschichte des Bolschewismus* (Berlin 1932), p. 33.

to different conclusions: the workers' class has developed and been differentiated, but the polarization of society has not taken place; and, compared with early capitalism, the economic and psychological status of the workers has changed, but increasing real income and longer leisure have not enhanced but, on the contrary, reduced the revolutionary temper. This can be interpreted as a tendency on the side of the workers and the lower middle classes to grow into the social texture. It is by no means quietism; on the contrary, there is a fast increasing tendency toward social action which is much more practical and in some ways more "anticapitalistic" than the obstinately empty radicalism which asks for "all or nothing," which is mainly phraseology and cannot mobilize large groups for real action. Looking back to the decades before the war in Germany, we now see that the workers had become a very well-organized and in many respects influential social group; their revolutionary ideology was in striking contrast to their readiness to co-operate with the state and with the employers, who, however, rejected such co-operation as long as they could. This being the case, all their endeavors to grow into the texture of society being frustrated, the revolutionary ideology gave them that certainty and self-confidence that every great group needs. There could be no substitute for this view of the fundamental importance of the class struggle.

ERRORS OF LABOR

After the war the position of the workers and of their organizations grew stronger, but the employers and the state—that is, the bureaucracy—maintained their attitude and kept the door as tightly closed as they possibly could. There was no real democratic tendency; there was constant tension, though not always overt. The workers' unions in all fields also lacked the necessary elasticity: they did not bestow important functions on younger people, they were still guided by the same old men who wavered between an ostensible radicalism and the old respect for traditional authorities and fear of assuming responsibilities. This inner contradiction in ideas led to contradiction in action: the revolutionary ideology would have meant utilization of the catastrophes of which the postwar period brought so many. In some of these catastrophes capitalism was saved by the workers and their representatives, who could at least have tried to magnify them and to seize power; but, far from that, they did not even attempt to gain in influence because they did not want too far-reaching entanglements. Thus the opportunities for action, which might have given a firm stand to the workers or to the state, were not used. For the same reason the trade unions and even the political parties of the workers were very slow in developing a staff of experts which they would have needed for a realistic policy, while the bourgeois par-

ties could always draw upon the entrepreneurs and the bureaucracy. As the workers desired to keep free of entanglements and were not revolutionary, they contented themselves mainly with policies of wages and social insurance—which, of course, in the long run were bound to lead to a conflict of interests in which they were certainly the weaker.

This whole pathetic story of the German workers' movement, the missing of all chances and the final destruction, shows that the only course for a transformation of society leads through the institutions of society. The course might also have been found through a revolution—but especially the Marxists should have recognized that the German workers, in spite of all the hardships they endured, were not revolutionary. This dilemma explains also why the policy of the workers up to 1933 was made almost exclusively by older people. The leaders, the bureaucracy, refused to admit young people whom they believed to be really revolutionary; they termed them communists and were afraid to give them any influence. But they were equally reluctant to admit young realists because they did not want to submerge the movement in a host of technical problems, in negotiations and entanglements which might have been resented by the workers who were used to thinking in terms of radicalism.

The irony is that in Germany and especially in Austria there had been built up a great number of successful and complicated organizations which in fact

satisfied social, political, cultural and ideological needs of the workers and white-collar workers; that in other words the process of forming the social group and relating it to the other groups had well begun. As the workers were at the same time more and more tied to the Republic and as democratic ideas had taken root with them, the old utopian idea of a revolutionary change was interpreted as a process of winning the famous "51 percent." Thus the revolutionary idea of a dialectic *Umschlag* (sublation) escaped into the struggle for a parliamentary majority—a development which is especially strange for Marxists, who know so well that the parliament can function only if it is the expression of the real situation. No worker assumed that a reactionary majority of 51 percent bourgeois votes would have legislated out of existence the workers' organizations and the new legal and factual position of the workers. In fact they underwent the experience of a reactionary parliament much more anxious to improve social legislation than its liberal predecessor. It could by no means challenge the vital interests of its opponents as long as there still existed society and social organizations, free press and free discussion. How could the workers expect that a vote of 51 percent—even if it were possible to achieve—could accomplish the total change into a classless society without a violent dictatorship? And was it not mere play with words to say that it is not dictatorship

if 51 percent are for it? And even if this were admissible, why then 51 percent if the cause is justified?

These deliberations show that the center of weight is the existence or nonexistence of society—whether there shall or shall not be the domination of the whole people by the representatives of a class, which thus must quickly lead to the destruction of all the independent organizations. If fate had led the German workers' parties on the path of democracy without any concessions to the utopian idea of a classless society, it might well be that democracy would have gained enough strength to survive. The English labor movement, though not aware of all its potentialities, was at least more realistic, and the trade unions especially never thought it worth while to pay a high price for the satisfaction of finding an outlet for their suppressed feelings in strong words.

ERRORS OF CAPITAL

So far we have dealt with the workers; but if we look at industry we see that it showed no deeper understanding of the situation. It did not realize the tremendous opportunities offered by the modern process of mechanization. It never wholeheartedly accepted democracy and co-operation with the workers. Industry accepted democracy only as a shield against communism, and prepared for a dictatorship of the right as soon as it should be strong enough. Industrial ideol-

ogy was still based on the orthodox notion that there can never be too great savings, and that wages can never be too low; hence it defended its own monopolies and opposed the existence of the trade unions. It asked the protection of the government, and at the same time undermined governmental authority. If one had asked the industrial leaders to draw a picture of the future they had in mind, they would have answered by pointing to prewar Germany, which they would have liked to see re-established, with the difference that industrial influence should be stronger. As they did not comprehend the new conditions and could not imagine that the boisterous promises of the National Socialists were more than a camouflage, they favored the ascendancy of the National Socialist Party, certain that its regime would keep the workers in check and allow the industrialists to have their way. Industry, agriculture and the old bureaucracy would rule, supported by the army, while the storm-troopers would take care of the workers, especially the communists. This attitude naturally made the workers hold the more firmly to the idea of a classless society, as they felt that their interests and organizations were considered the deadly enemies of the existing economic system. Since hope of evolution was ruled out by the entrepreneurs, the workers—like the entrepreneurs—pinned their hopes to a utopia. But for the entrepreneurs the utopia was the past, and thus they sacrificed their future to the National Socialists.

Reality was closer to great underlying forces than to the ideas which had been inherited from prewar time. The improvement of the German economic system went on unabated; around 1929 and 1930 the productive power of German industry and agriculture was greater than ever before. There were serious difficulties because of great foreign debts and lack of capital cushions abroad, but they were not unsurmountable, as the standstill agreement after the crash of 1931 proved. With some adjustment of the currency and an active domestic economic policy the crisis could have been alleviated and shortened. But industry preferred to insist on a deflationary policy which promised a reduction of the workers' power.

In spite of this constant struggle, which frequently became a disagreeable quarrel, and in spite of the very severe depression, the country moved toward a far higher economic level, as the later increase in production and efficiency showed. The social situation itself was balanced; there were various groups in the population, each of them well organized, each of them evolving a community spirit in its institutions. It is easy to see today in what way economic as well as social conditions could have led to a new period of recovery in which ideas very similar to some general principles underlying the New Deal would have received great support because of the American parallel. Such a situation, in which the economic interests might have clashed and the social groups might have

opposed each other in order to attain greater power, is certainly not and would never be an idyl. But the factions, the difficulties, the struggle, are at the same time the source of new ideas, of new ways of solving economic and technical problems—by trial and error, it may be, but with the preservation of the freedom which is the condition of the survival of our civilization.

REALISTIC SOCIALISM

To believe that a classless society is a utopia and, if achieved, would be a mass-state is not to abandon socialism but, on the contrary, to re-establish it on a solid and realistic basis. If we conceive of socialism as an economic system with greater though not complete equality of income, in which society takes the lead not only in political but also in economic matters, in which the productive forces of our time are fully developed and put to use for the interest of the great masses—then such a planned social and economic system is possible on a democratic basis. The standard of living in such a system could rise quickly, the position of each group could be maintained and improved according to its service and political energy. And, whatever the situation, after every failure there could and would be a comeback, as each regime must outlive its prestige or make mistakes and thus be followed by another, representing other groups.

This change of policy does not mean that there is not an underlying trend of evolution. Experiences of the last decades show that such decisive steps in transformation as social policy, collective bargaining, extension of public enterprises, the growing weight of the state as an economic agency, have been taken without regard to the economic or social group in power. In Great Britain as well as in pre-Hitler Germany very important steps toward a "collective economy" were made. This tendency is unavoidable with the mechanization of industry, the increasing size of plants and the increasing importance of all public services. The greater the problem which unemployment offers, the greater tend to be the inroads the state makes into business. When such a period is followed by a period of brisk business, structural changes in the system are not undone by the rise in the standard of living.

It is often not sufficiently recognized that with increasing wealth the position of the workers as consumers becomes much more important. But with diminishing opportunities for investments and quickly increasing savings, the purchasing power of the masses must be stressed, and it is realized especially in the United States that savings need a corresponding consumption in order to be effective. As soon as it is accepted that spending is a condition of a balanced social system the main reason for keeping wages down will disappear. I do not mean to say that modern economic

theory makes the clash of interests less severe, but it indicates an important change in the objective situation; it further indicates a development along certain lines which makes obsolete the former ideas of an irreconcilable class struggle.

Marx believed that every economic and social system exhausts its own productive potentialities, and that it must collapse if the technical potentialities are in contradiction to the fundamental legal and institutional ways of exploiting the economic resources. Another social system is then due and will come into existence in the wake of a revolution, as no ruling class will voluntarily renounce its position.

This view is too general and overlooks the fact that history shows various ways of bringing about changes. The most important elements of the Marxian scheme are: first, lack of insight or of adequate analysis, since social thinking is dominated by the ruling class and its thinking is necessarily focused on its own partial interests; second, that the new order might develop the social class of the future (like the organized, disciplined, solidaristic workers' class under capitalism) but cannot develop interests which can grow stronger while the old economic and social system still exists.¹

¹ The second part of the sentence may appear somewhat obscure although in the light of the following sentences and in the context of the whole chapter its meaning is clear enough. According to the Marxian scheme a new social order can emerge only from the revolutionary action of the proletariat, the class antagonistic to the old order. However, there are also interstitial in-

History, however, shows us that changes have occurred without any sudden revolution or outburst of violence—as, for instance, the industrial revolution itself. In this case the new class consisted of people drifting from old, historical groups into the new, as innumerable examples show; thus very powerful vested interests developed in spite of the fierce opposition of the threatened classes. Nowadays the tendency toward collective economy is supported by people who formerly would have been either capitalist entrepreneurs or owners of landed estates, while the bureaucracy changes its ideology and the employees support this change politically, as far as they are aware of its relation to their interests. This transformation is somewhat alien to the American mind, which still thinks in terms of individual opportunities, but it has already taken root with the British people to an extent which no one would have anticipated twenty-five years ago.

Looking at world conditions as they are today, at the economic and social structure of the advanced democratic countries, the trend does not seem to point toward a classless society with centrally and strictly regulated production and distribution. The trend seems rather to a system in which the obstacles to economic expansion are eliminated by central and re-terests which supersede the class struggle in the old order and may bring about a new order without revolution. The rise of capitalism itself is taken as a case in point, and certain tendencies in the economic policy of modern democracies are interpreted in the same way.—*Ed.*

gional planning measures, and in which idle resources are fully utilized either by a special spending policy or by a redistribution of income. The continuation and elaboration of this policy will perhaps be helped greatly by a labor and middle-class movement which realizes that a very quick rise in standards is possible and therefore provides the political pressure necessary to outweigh the historical groups, which still cling to a petrified ideology. The superiority of such a system to the centralized dictatorial regimes, especially in the standard of living, should become obvious very soon.

Chapter Six

HOW LONG CAN THE MASS- STATE EXIST?

The "betrayal" of revolutions is in fact often their fulfillment. It is true that the promises made before a revolution, and the illusions of the participants, are usually proved false. But if we conceive of revolutions as phases of changes which make way for a new distribution of social, political and economic power, the periods of excitement will be limited. A radical aim cannot dominate the scene to the exclusion of all others. Conditions must "settle down" as they usually do, and even if the state of revolution is officially declared to continue, it is no longer the masses who are behind the important decisions, but the new social setup.

It was this hope for a "settling down" on which the upper classes based their great confidence in the fascist regimes. As fascism was not a workers' government, it was taken for a conservative, capitalist and middle-class regime. The opinion was long held—and still is by people who think only in terms of class rule—that the historical groups would sooner or later reassert their position. That, however, has become very unlikely by now, and therefore no one can foretell what the conditions or the political system would be after a breakdown of the fascist regimes. But another problem deserves our attention: Can the mass-state continue to exist? Or are there inherent forces which must destroy it, and if so what are they?

THE INTELLECTUALS

It has frequently been said that intellectual freedom "cannot be destroyed." The strength and the explosive power of the spirit, many believe, cannot be entirely suppressed; it may be driven underground, but there it will become so strong that no authority can protect itself against it.

This view is derived from historical experience, but conditions have changed. On the one hand there is the much more efficient organization of the state, which can and does control public opinion; there is a complete absence of protection for any dissident; there is the educational system, which makes the infiltration

of "subversive" ideas into the youth almost impossible. And on the other hand there is the fact that the intellectuals gave almost no resistance, not even a protest, when in the beginning of the regime complete control was declared over public opinion, press, teaching and all publication. The regime could not take care of everything, in the beginning, but the willingness of all those who had formerly professed belief in the independence of the spirit went beyond the limits anyone could anticipate. This lack of resistance, this willingness to bow, can be explained only by the terrorism with which the masses—the students and white-collar workers included—threatened everyone who dared to resist, and by the co-operation of the government with the terroristic gangs. Even so it is amazing how quickly the learned professions, the artists and to some extent even the church presented a unified spiritual front against freedom of thinking. Was the regime not thus justified in saying that liberty was passionately detested by the whole populace? The intellectuals in Germany have never recovered from this defeat which they accepted, and it is very unlikely that they could command any authority in a future Germany; nor can they expect their weight to be felt in whatever transformation might ensue in the Nazi regime itself. There had been in prewar and even more in postwar times a great independence of thinking and a great influence of the intellectuals: now it was destroyed with one stroke.

We can be no less than skeptical concerning what was left of a spiritual existence. In the beginning many of the intellectuals were swept away by the enthusiasm of the moment; the more they realized the nature of this new ideal state, the more they tried to keep aloof and to preserve themselves. For what and for whom? The intellectuals in Germany had always separated themselves from the people, more than in other countries, and had boasted of their independence which did not allow any political group or practical interest to influence them. That is what they thought, at least. This situation now continues, but with the difference that free thinking, as far as it has been preserved by individuals, is hidden underground, and its social weight, the respect it formerly commanded, has completely vanished. It cannot thrive in a spiritual climate in which differences of opinion are derided and in which deliberation, hesitation, discussion, compromise, are accepted not as a way of life but as degeneration and decay. Any leadership for an upheaval or a transformation can hardly be expected from the intellectuals.

THE UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT

Many hopes—probably more outside than inside Germany—are pinned to the underground movement. It exists, and is known to the regime. But it must be very cautious. There are only very small groups, the mem-

bers of which know each other intimately but who cannot dare to influence public opinion. Under conditions much more favorable than those obtaining in a modern well-administered state, the underground movement in czarist Russia also was very small, and its chance was not to overthrow the regime but to prepare the cadres for a revolutionary movement which might arise from the general situation. If the Russian army had not suffered defeat in eastern Asia in a war which was never popular, the workers' movement could not have gained momentum. After the defeat, however, the underground groups emerged into the open and could play their role. The decisive force in this first Russian revolution was the discontent of the masses, their lack of enthusiasm which made for an atmosphere in which the workers and poor peasants could take the lead. Without the activation of these social groups that had previously existed and taken form through their organizations—though they were very restricted in their activities—the revolution would have been no more than a succession of riots. The special feature in the German, and to a lesser extent in the Italian, situation is the absence of such social groups. They will perhaps emerge in a revolutionary period, but the underground movement can do nothing toward fomenting revolution. The great difference between the Russian and the present German underground movement seems to be that the former had access to the social scene while

the latter has not. It can "preserve the holy fire"—but compared with the widespread and intensive activity of the Russian movement it is a very faint spark.

BUSINESS INTERESTS

A positive asset for the regime is that it creates vested interests in the business field, despite the fact that it destroyed the capitalistic system as it had previously existed. The complete control of investments, the keeping down of wages and prices, the diversion of productive energy and all profits and savings, the increasing tax burden—all these served to create a circular flow of money and commodities in which private wealth takes on the form of public loans, the interest payments on which are again to be invested in such loans. If capitalism as a social system means that the main part of the national wealth consists in private property, the owners of which also wield political power in the interest of their profits, then this system has been destroyed. But the large private incomes still exist, and the state has initiated and imposed upon the private capitalist the building up of new industries to make substitutes for imported raw materials. These industries, financed by the profits of the old industries, depend upon the continuation of demand for these substitutes. They depend therefore on the existence of the regime and its foreign policy. Were the government overthrown and a conciliatory

policy resumed, these investments would lose their value. Thus private business interests have been created that support an economic system in which private enterprise is to play a losing game.

THE BUREAUCRACY

The ties between bureaucracy and society have vanished. The bureaucracy is given a certain technical function, while its political weight is declining. Bureaucracy under the Republic was ostensibly a machinery operating under the orders of the government, with the administrative officers especially having no power to insist on their own will, while judges were independent and their decisions not subject to any political pressure. But in fact the bureaucrats were much more powerful under the Republic than under the imperial regime, where a strict discipline had prevailed and where they had had to take orders without discussing them. The Republican ministers always felt somewhat at the mercy of their staffs and did not dare to overrule their suggestions. The fact that neither the middle classes nor the trade unions had a real will to reign, and the lack of well-trained, loyal officials in their ranks, led to a government by bureaucrats which was strong enough to obstruct whatever measures were decided upon by the Cabinet.

The National Socialist regime was confronted by

the same bureaucracy, but it took control from the beginning by appointing officials who were openly representatives of the party. The government destroyed the basis of whatever might have been left of a quasi-independent administration by a special law providing for the dismissal of any official for racial or political reasons, or because a change in administration seemed necessary. Every official and every judge was thus at the mercy of the government, that is, of the party. The backbone of the bureaucracy, whose power and standing had developed through generations, was broken. They had become, at last, what they had always successfully opposed under the Republican government: a staff of technical functionaries, carrying out orders whether they liked them or not. In fact it was only with the help of this old bureaucracy that the new regime could carry through an artificial policy of complete control, even in fields where intangibles and uncontrollable sentiments play such a great role, as in banking and monetary affairs, education and church matters.

This old bureaucracy represented the idea of a legitimate order which ostensibly was above the parties; it represented "the state," which in Germany was always something above and different from society. But in fact it was co-ordinated with the lower and upper middle classes, the high bourgeoisie and the aristocracy; and thus it reflected, though in a more sublime and more detached way, the opinions of these

groups from which it drew its strength. That became clear after the war, when the old historical groups used the bureaucracy and won its assistance in their fight against the new Republican masses. Each petty official in his "neutral," detached position, even though he might only sell stamps at the post office, became the flag-bearer of the old times, ostensibly representing the "state." He felt in his right in obstructing the policy of the government, which was to him the representative of "parties."

Under the National Socialist regime the social groups, the middle classes included, were smashed; the dissolution of all organizations and the destruction of the free press deprived them of all influence. But destroyed with them was the soil on which the bureaucracy had grown. It lost its weight, and a few decrees backed by violence proved that "the state," far from being an historical power, was only the ideology of a specific mixture of social groups, which dissolved into air as soon as the social basis was destroyed.

THE ARMY

As the weakness of the bureaucracy was apparent from the outset, the hopes of the conservative groups in Germany and abroad turned to the army. Nothing proves the lack of understanding of what has happened in Germany more than this trust in the Prus-

sian army, the resurrection of which had, before 1933, been the nightmare of the western countries. When Hitler assumed power they were ready to believe that the German army, built up with tremendous speed, would be a conservative and reasonably pacifistic power. This strange idea resulted from the fact that the army tried to preserve its own spirit, that it could not have been used as a terroristic instrument against its own people and that the officers' corps tried to remain independent from the influence of the National Socialist Party. But such attempts were a very long way from actually maintaining the aloofness of the army, preserving its independence in politics and keeping the ranks of the officers' corps closed to party men. The old generals and their friends, the junkers and the patriciate, kept their positions as long as they could; but with the growth of the army, the enrollment of many young officers, the increasing organizations of the storm-troops and the elite guards—well armed and trained for civil war—and with the reduced influence of the aristocracy, the army became socially and politically an empty shell, despite its improvement in efficiency.

Thus the armed forces became once more what they had been before 1914: a politically indifferent tool in the hands of the government. In prewar times this did not mean that the army had no influence, since the groups from which its officers were recruited ruled the state. Under National Socialism, however,

everything was different, and in February 1938, with the dismissal of a score of conservative generals, even the illusionists realized that once again the opportunity was past. This event proved that the German army was not an active political power, that its leaders had neither the courage nor the personality to establish its rule. There was, before February 1938, only this alternative: revolution from above, destruction of the party, establishment of a military dictatorship with some representation of the social groups—or complete and silent abdication of such ambitions and transformation of the army into the armed force of the party. No realistic observer could doubt that the latter alternative was to be expected.

THE PARTY

The economic, the social, the institutional powers of the old society no longer exist; society is pulverized, and the party has a real monopoly of organization and a complete control over public opinion. What is the party? Can such an organization exist over a long period of time?

The National Socialist Party is based on the “leader principle,” which means that discussion within the party is reduced to a minimum. There has never been such freedom of discussion as existed in the Bolshevik Party before Stalin eradicated the opposition. In the National Socialist Party the leader was made the de-

cisive power from the beginning; there is no tradition, no body of permanent ideas, no "old guard." The National Socialist Party is a phenomenon in itself (see Chapter IV, p. 99 ff.). Here some remarks are necessary about its later development. When the centers of independent opinion, or of any opinion, were destroyed, the party had to be built up as the all-powerful organization. Three functions served this purpose: terroristic control within the party; regulation of its large bureaucracy; and the continuation of activity on the part of the masses.

To establish terroristic control within the party, the members must be made to follow the lead of their "Führer." The discipline is army discipline, but without any law protecting the soldier; the only protection of the individual is that a leader will not dare overreach himself if his men are rough, in case they get out of hand. But the National Socialist discipline seems to be so strong and the power of the Führer so overwhelming that very few cases of opposition or revolt are reported. Then, too, the party member has the compensation of being offered opportunities to release his pent-up energies against the victims of the regime, for instance in the actions against the Jews or in the concentration camps. It is difficult to know whether the stories of concentration camps for seditious party members are true. On the whole the terrorism within the party against its members is thoroughly accepted and is indispensable in an organiza-

tion in which the leader decides everything, and in which the special disciplinary courts follow the same principle and do not allow for a "Magna Charta" for party members. The wider the reach of the party, the more completely the idea of right is destroyed, and this implies within the party the annihilation of discussion and opinions. Here we have the principle of the army organization in the political field—certainly something new, at least in western Europe. It is up to the leader and his aides to develop the political ideas and, what is more important, to decide upon action; the party executes these decisions, but it is void of any intellectual power.

But the party has also a tremendously great bureaucratic organization. It has its bodies of officials who control the state administration; and through its various functionaries it reaches into every street and every house. As the labor front, the industrial and the agricultural organizations are all branches of the party, there are many hundreds of thousands of officials—powerful or petty—who feel flattered and find personal satisfaction in exerting power. But none of these bureaucratic bodies has any life of its own: they all act as they are commanded to; they execute the orders given by their superiors, who also in turn receive orders. In short, there can be no independent life; the spirit dries up. It is true that in other large organizations also the ideas and the tactics are suggested or commanded from above; but they are dis-

cussed, they are improved upon or changed in practice, there is life in the rank and file which works back to the top. Nothing like that can exist in a party in which the leader principle is only another term for tyrannical subjugation.

Then there is the third function: keeping the masses in a state of flux, preventing their apathy, their indifference, their boredom. It is the constant endeavor of the party to keep this enthusiasm burning, as boredom is almost as dangerous as opposition. Boredom can lead to passive resistance, and it spreads easily. If it reached the party and the functionaries of the party, the regime could no longer whip up the emotions and with them the exertions which are the basis of its far-flung plans. Thus the masses are again and again agitated, they are never allowed to settle down; and, although the results are often smaller than expected, they are sufficient to keep the regime in power. There are the great party gatherings in September, routine festivals such as May first for the worker and the harvest gathering in the fall for the farmers, the celebration of birthdays, the laying of cornerstones; and there are celebrations of successes in foreign policy, and the summoning of the Reichstag to express its consent to measures or announcements of policy. On all these occasions the public is called upon; but, in accordance with the structure of the state, at such meetings the masses are only told, they must applaud the decisions taken, they must stand at attention,

march, sing, raise their hands in salute. Thus mobilization of the masses is repeated over and over again. There is no discussion nor even any comment. There is not that give-and-take characteristic of meetings in democratic countries, where the speaker depends upon the response of his audience and where the keynote he sounds may have to be modified if he feels that he is out of tune with his followers.

All this is well known, but the question of whether society can rest on such a basis over a very long period has hardly been discussed. As we have no experience to draw upon, any hypothesis offered here is a venture the truth of which will be tested by future events. In a state of peace the government and the party can carry on, and with them the bureaucracy and the armed forces. There is, for the reasons given above, no danger for the regime of the administrative machinery or the army acquiring a degree of independence that would force a change of policy. The ease with which the economic policy is changed is characteristic of the power of the regime.

As to the party organization itself, the principles on which it has been built up—unchanging leadership and infrequent shifts of important personalities within the party—make it very unlikely that there are currents and undercurrents of opinion. On the whole it seems that there has been a certain drift toward a more radical policy, but this is hardly due to any pressure of opposition within the party; it is much

more likely the result of a situation which called for increasingly tight planning, implying measures restricting the freedom of workers as well as of employers. There are certainly radical and romantic groups, but what is important is that they have no independent voice nor weight; they cannot pull the party in a certain direction unless the ruling oligarchy wants to move that way. It is, then, not the power of dynamic ideas nor the inner life of the party which dominates the policy. It is the interest of the ruling oligarchy in keeping power, and that is possible only if the emergence of independent organizations is prevented, if the party itself remains an institutionalized mass-movement, able to reach and revitalize the masses. This means, however, that there are two conflicting goals: to keep down any spontaneous groupings within the party, and still to preserve its "life." But as this life is emotional, the goals—which could not be reached in a democratic organization—can be attained.

It is this peculiar character of the party as a mass-movement which accounts for a greater and more elaborate bureaucracy than any other political body in Germany ever had. That is a paradox only on the surface. As there is no inner life, as nothing is left to the membership but everything is placed in the hands of well-ordered and well-controlled functionaries, the party must rest on a hierarchical bureaucracy appointed from above, educated or drilled for its tasks

of controlling the masses, transmitting orders to them and keeping them in suspense, and preserving their enthusiasm. This preservation of enthusiasm distinguishes the National Socialist bureaucracy from the old state bureaucracy, which did not lead the people but administered them in a dry and matter-of-fact way. It is also different from ordinary party bureaucracy, which is usually void of enthusiasm and too frequently realizes that it lags behind the emotions and ideas of the membership, and that if it fails to catch up with them new parties will emerge. In the National Socialist Party the relation between the bureaucracy and the masses is unique: it is the everyday duty of the machinery to substitute for spontaneous thinking, discussion or co-operation those emotions without which the whole party would become an empty labyrinth. What is the source of the authority and the power for both administration and leadership?

Any mass-party which does not stand for a special group or interest or idea, which claims the dignity of a religion, depends upon the charisma of the leader. This charisma is one of the greatest secrets of social psychology and of history.¹ It can hardly be analyzed or defined abstractly; but there is a certain relation between the crowd or masses and the type of leader to whom they react. The charisma of the army leader depends as much upon steadfastness, reliability, readi-

¹ See also pp. 39-41 and Appendix V.—*Ed.*

ness to share the lot of the soldiers, as on coolness, lack of sentimentality and superior intelligence. If people must die they want to be sure that their leader has considered everything and is able to reduce the sacrifices to a minimum. But in the case of a mass-party set on conquering political power and keeping it by whatever means are necessary, if this mass-party is never driven into a really dangerous struggle with serious sacrifices involved for great numbers, if the followers are told from the beginning that destiny is on their side, if discipline is compensated by the permission to rejoice in ruthless emotional violence against unarmed minorities, if the government itself professes the violation of thousand-year-old codes of civilized behavior and challenges the humanitarian conscience of the whole world, if history is staged for the masses as a miracle, an almost unbelievable fulfillment of ancient dreams—then in such a case the charisma of the leader will be mystical and miraculous, his character will correspond to the irrational nature of the crowd. The nature and the success of the leader will decide, more than anything else, whether the crowd-situation can survive. It will depend upon him and his success whether the combination of blind obedience and enthusiasm can exist.

This psychological miracle, however, was greatly helped by terrorism. The monopoly of armed power, the complete domination of all means of coercion by the party, did not seem to be sufficiently strong. Thus

the groups which had formerly opposed Nazi domination were persecuted, tormented, their leaders imprisoned and tortured; there had been no civil war, but the "new state" behaved as barbarians would after conquering a barbarian enemy on the battlefield. This thwarted all potential opposition. The average citizen cannot be expected to be a hero—he will side with the powerful if they use terrorism freely. It is only against this background of terrorism that the comparative success of the party bureaucracy can be understood. If there were free speech and discussion, even though only within the party, the obedience and enthusiasm would soon disappear and charisma would no longer suffice.

The more the emotional basis of the regime disappears, the more important the machinery will be. Bureaucratic routine and at least potential violence are its necessary pillars. It would be rash to conclude that such an order cannot last. It is a drab order in spite of all its music, flags and ordered enjoyment; but with every shred of opposition radically extirpated, nothing is left which could set an end to it.

It is true that the bureaucracy of the totalitarian mass-state is bound to degenerate into empty routine. Compared with it German bureaucracy before and after the World War was productive, energetic, vital, because of the constant influence of the social groups and because it was under the spell of public opinion and the various ideas of the time. But degeneration

of the party and its bureaucracy would endanger its power only if other ideas were given the chance to permeate the population, or if the ruling oligarchy, especially the younger members of it, became doubtful of their convictions. Under conditions as they prevail this can hardly be expected, except in case of a runaway inflation or of a war.

If there is neither inflation nor war, the political system will continue but will gradually change its character. There is and will be a gigantic machine, driven by its own interests and by fear of losing ground; strict order will be enforced, especially as nothing is left to private initiative, even in the economic sphere. We are well justified in saying that this "state"—if it can be called a state and not just a party tyranny—has no parallel in history, for never before have the weight and power of social groups been completely destroyed. But as long as the machinery functions and prevents the emergence of organized opposition, the state will not disintegrate from within. Social structures do not crumble away or die off like old trees, they do not rot: they are subject to changes in interests, in ideas, and if neither of these is in process then mere weight preserves the state.

IMPERIALISM

Such a petrification—the paradoxical result of a movement based on vitality, youth, emotions, the irrational

—could only have been expected, however, if National Socialism had remained within its ethnical borders. With the annexation of Czechoslovakia and with plans for similar protectorates under way Germany has embarked upon imperialism.¹ It is too early yet to see how these new “dominions” will be administered, but it is logical to believe that society in all countries affiliated with Germany will be destroyed. Totalitarian regimes will be established, the administration will be centralized; but this regime within the “protectorate” or dominion will only exploit and administer, it will be merely military and bureaucratic. The subjugated peoples, the Czechs, Slovaks and so on, cannot be allowed to organize and build up a National Socialist state of their own; if they were, it could form the nucleus of independence within the greater Reich. Force and if necessary terrorism will keep down any attempt at real autonomy.

The farther the boundaries of the Reich are extended, in the event of the incorporation for instance of Hungary and Rumania and Poland—and that will occur if the “stop-Hitler bloc” does not succeed in aligning the threatened states in a solid alliance—the more ruthless will the policy be. The Germans will be the dominating nation. They will establish puppet governments, but in fact they will reign, and the great German middle class will find its function: to admin-

¹ The reader should keep in mind that this discerning section was written before the outbreak of the present war.—Ed.

ister, to regiment, to terrify the other peoples. The new dominions will be disarmed; their systems of transportation and industry will be thoroughly controlled; there will be no free press, no voice of opposition. If the present German machinery for the oppression of all opposition can work against its own people, it will be the more ruthlessly used against potential enemies. This will be a stern order, and wherever necessary the full power of the army and the police will be mobilized against these small nations. Once such a "protectorate" has been seen in its true nature it will become obvious that the nature of the National Socialist state has changed from that of an emotional mass-state, which was the first phase, to an imperialistic mass-state, in which military objectives will dominate.

Thus the question posed earlier in this chapter of whether the mass-state is a stable, definite form of government has already been superseded; inherent forces have driven this originally nationally restricted mass-state beyond its own limits. The new state emerging before our eyes still retains the characteristic feature of a mass-state, but it has grown beyond that into an imperialistic political body. The question of stability thus becomes a problem of foreign policy. In this transformation conquest is the decisive step; and conquest on a large scale would influence the structure of the mass-state.

Conquest can take on many forms, from the old

barbaric way of enslaving the population, selling many of them on the market and imposing heavy tributes and taxes upon the subjugated country, up to the most refined methods of developing the productive forces and using the colony as an outlet for profitable investments, and at the same time providing hundreds or thousands of jobs for young middle-class people who may serve as civil servants or as officers in garrisons consisting of native soldiers. History shows many ways of exploitation. What will the Nazi protectorate be like? Italy could follow the practice of older colonization in Ethiopia; Germany will have to elaborate new methods in her European "colonies."

The countries within reach of German domination all have German minorities, some of them very large; this is true of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Poland, Rumania. These minorities have been courted for many years by Germany and a divided loyalty has been developed, with the greater emphasis on the loyalty to their "own blood." There has been no European map so important in German schools as that showing the whole Continent dotted with German settlements. Wherever there is to be a protectorate, this minority will at once rise to great power, backed by the German army. It will receive full citizenship in the Reich, including the duties of military service. It will then sooner or later police the country in which it formerly had sought, and usually received, equal treatment.

There can be no political life in such a country, no free elections, no variety of party opinion and, above all, no political autonomy involving free criticism of the measures decreed by the "protecting" state. Consequently, social groups with organizations and publications of their own cannot be tolerated; we can expect the same destruction of all independent centers of economic or political interests as we have witnessed in the totalitarian countries. Here again the German minority might be very helpful in tightening the control over the protectorate. Schools—elementary, secondary and collegiate institutions—will be subjected to the same influence. If the task is too great, the Reich might decide to decree the existence of a "second-rate" Nordic type, which would have some privileges and a certain standing compared with those outside the pale, but which of course would have to fit itself into a system built up and dominated from Berlin. There would be "semi-Nazi" organizations then, deriving their power from the dominating state and thus controlling and terrorizing their own people. It is doubtful whether such an organization could be built up wherever the national feeling is deeply rooted.

There will be no government in such a "protectorate," although there will be a cabinet. But the cabinet will not derive its power from a mandate of the population, nor will it have its own means of power: it will be a puppet in every respect and the

measures it takes will be decided by the "protector." With money, the banking system, credit, price and wage policies, all determined from the outside, the country will not enjoy any liberty of action. In a watertight system of control, the economic system will be operated for the benefit of the protector, whose requirements for armament purposes especially will take precedence over everything.

All these countries will be subjected to the same system of control as far as capital export, investments and migration are concerned. The last but equally important measures will be for control of the theater, art, literature and scientific publications. The aim will undoubtedly be a universal "co-ordination" with the elimination of any independent power on the side of the protectorates. It will be a sort of enslavement, with the difference that the "protector" will expect not only labor and riches, but also a complete acceptance of the tenets of the dominating state and free "spontaneous" action in its interest. This is more than any majority or despotic rule in prewar Russia, for instance, ever extracted from its minorities. Even the rule of the old Austrian state during the period of absolutism was liberal compared with this implantation of principles entirely alien to the spirit of these subjected peoples.

As for the "protecting" state and its citizens, the goal of this domination is increase in political power, and especially in armed power. It would seem that a

liberal policy of alliances would be safer and would yield better results, or at least that it would be preferable even from the viewpoint of the protector to grant its protectorates a status comparable to that of the British dominions. That would be true for an expansion aiming at high profits and at accumulation of capital, but these are not the aims of German foreign policy, which is not based on any special industrial interests in exports. The conquest serves to increase political power and to prepare for new conquest. Even if some industries should gain by it through concessions, control of foreign production, etc., this would be only a secondary effect and not the aim of such a policy.

No country dominated by a totalitarian state like Germany can expect to enjoy greater liberties than the German citizens themselves; it will be subjected to a ruthless rule and completely organized for war purposes. Is there no limit to this—does a country need all these resources for war preparation, especially if the man power cannot be utilized in the trenches?

The development of modern war technique has created two great problems which were never experienced, at least to such an extent, before the World War: the complete mobilization of man power makes it almost impossible to maintain home production at a level sufficient for the armies and the population; and, even if home production could continue at top speed, no country's natural resources are large enough

to provide what is needed, perhaps with the one exception of the United States. With annexation of some protectorates these problems would be solved for Germany. In case of war, workers could be brought from them into Germany, where they, the prisoners of a war which was not fought, would man the machines. And the whole industry of these countries would have to work for the "protector." Rich democratic states, if they have free access to the sea, can rely on imports; the totalitarian states would fall back upon the conscript labor of their European "colonies," which would prove much more important than any distant tropical lands. Recent military theory assumes that up to eighteen workers are necessary in home industry to supply the material for one soldier at the front. Even if this is exaggerated, the great change in war technique explains the advantage of such "protectorates," quite apart from their natural resources.

This control and exploitation will be carried through by German middle-class people. They will be members of the party, they will enjoy privileges, which will probably not mean large incomes but prestige. At last they will satisfy their lust for power, even more than within Germany. This sinister task, which will probably gradually enroll hundreds of thousands, will open the doors to many who never before left the country; it will make for a new upper class, believing in, enjoying and practicing force. The vast

machinery will constantly grow, and a transformation of the state may lie ahead in which the masses would gradually be lost sight of. National Socialism would then be an abstract power, cut off even from its original source. It would cease to be an institutionalized mass-movement; it would have left its old anchorage. Where would it go from there?

This question cannot be answered, but the fact that it must be raised shows that a mass-state has no inherent stability but is an explosive within the society of nations. It further shows to what an extent the interests of all states—democratic, autocratic, oligarchic, be they decent or corrupt, pacifistic or rapacious—are identical once they are faced with this phenomenon. It proves that the coming struggle, if there is one, will not mean a fight for democracy, but for something more concrete: for the existence of society and private life. And in the end, if it is too late for this struggle or if the mass-state can destroy the fighting power of its adversaries, the world is headed for another age of slavery.

Chapter Seven

THE MASS-STATE AND SOCIALISM

It has frequently been said that totalitarian states are driven into socialism, whether they like it or not; that perhaps the aims of the revolutionaries who fought against capitalism might be realized, even though the descendants of old socialism are thrown into concentration camps. Such opinions imply that we have socialism wherever the entrepreneur is eliminated and wherever the state dominates the economic sphere by organizing, controlling and directing every productive activity, to the exclusion of the slightest independence of the individual. But this is to speak as if human life did not count, nor the purposes for

which men work, nor the ideas and emotions that make humanity.

We must return to the origins of these great ideas, the names of which are so frequently misused. Socialism is one of the intellectual's ways of solving the age-old problem of how to save the individual. The institutions of society will always trap the individual: the purposes of the state and the exigencies of the economic system have for millennia ensnared anyone who wanted to escape and find himself. There are the subjected and exploited classes: everyone who belongs to them is made a tool or, what is perhaps worse, a cog in the machinery. But the rulers also are slaves of the system, and frequently feel enslaved. In fact it is mostly members of the upper classes who realize, from their elevated position, the spiritual bondage in which the people are kept, and visualize another society in which the eternal urge for freedom could be better satisfied. They may have in mind either political or economic reform or revolution, but there is hardly any dream of a better future which is not directed toward two goals: less poverty in the world and more freedom and leisure for a full life. Whatever the historical epoch, these have been the goals, with liberal humanitarians as well as with socialists. Only on the surface is socialism so different from liberalism: there is only the difference in the economic and social structure which determines the form of a better time, while the basic values are al-

most identical. The socialist's stress on class allegiance does not mean a denial of the individual's claim to liberty, but only a belief in class action to bring about liberty: under capitalism the single worker can protect himself only by joining an organization. Breaking the chains of feudalism meant making the farmer independent and free of any tribute to the manorial lord; the worker cannot be made an economically independent individual, and therefore his liberation presupposes the liquidation of capitalistic enterprise in one way or another. But the goal of both socialism and liberalism remains the same: liberation of the worker.

When socialism first appeared as a dream to supersede capitalism, to break the "chains of wage slavery," society was to everyone the great humanitarian organization which would replace the egoistic, profit-hunting single employer by an enlightened, efficient, well-organized, rationalistic collective system. The more sordid the factories became, the more serious the struggle of competition; and the more perplexing the vicissitudes of the business cycle in the first phase of capitalism, the more unlikely it seemed that there would be a universal response to the idea of rational social action. The clash of interests was obvious. Hegelian dialectics in conjunction with the embittered struggle for shorter working hours, better labor conditions and higher wages confirmed the view that the power of ideas was not strong enough to solve the

economic and political autonomies of the capitalistic world. Setbacks of social reform contributed to this belief, and the great disturbances after the war—inflation and the great depression—seemed to prove that capitalistic society was not able to cope with its problems. It was during this period that the individualistic character of socialistic liberty began to disappear within the workers' class—better to have a workers' state which would take care of the individual. Within this state he would be sheltered, would be assigned a job, would rule through his representatives—or be ruled by them. There would be no great difference between the one and the other, as the class gives the ideas and the individual is deceived anyway if he believes he follows his own thought.

Dictatorship, which seemed in the beginning a betrayal of the original ideas of socialism, began to make inroads into the thinking of a world which seemed to be out of joint and in need of a firm and even strict leadership. It is true that the old socialist parties in the western world still clung to democracy, but they obviously lost ground and their policy was wavering as they encountered fascist dictatorship, which in the beginning seemed to everyone a capitalistic movement. Intentionally I have refrained from discussing the struggle between the various socialist groups; nor do I wish to discuss their ideological differences concerning the idea of a classless society. Regardless of these differences it seems obvious today that the idea

of a classless society was the counterpart of the stratified society which everybody knew, and within which group fought against group. But the experiences of the last years have imposed upon every socialist the necessity of revising his opinions and giving thought to the question of what a classless society can be.

It is the theme of this book to show that society is always stratified, and that not only its productivity but also its cultural evolution depends upon an independent group life. A whole people is economically and spiritually a universe, its interests very manifold; the groups within it belong to various historical ages, their thinking and feeling, their codes and ways of living are different—and it is this variety of interests and of ideas which enables it to live on its own ground, by its own resources and by its own decisions. As the articulation of the world into many peoples makes for interrelations and interdependent influences, the migration of ideas, styles, art, sciences, so also does social stratification provide a multitude of aspects which can persist and develop only on the basis of various interests and opinions. Without this articulation and stratification we would have a desert, just as an individual left to himself, not exposed to the testing, stimulating and provoking influence of his fellow men, would gradually be dulled to some strange routine of a meaningless life. And if we consider not an individual but a people, then the absence

of groups, the destruction of groups, can be expected only if a tremendous destroying force is conjured. As far as we know history, this has never been done; ruling groups have been superseded by other groups—but to destroy all of them would have taken a social dynamite stronger than anything we have ever experienced. This social dynamite is the masses. If they can be set to work on society, if they do not just touch off one explosion and then after a short interval be allowed to subside, but if they continue to be the main and only social force, then the destruction can be complete.

The concept of a classless society was coined before our experience with a mass-state. Inasmuch as the classless society implies the abolition of the classes, and we cannot expect the classes to give up their existence of their own free will, the classless society can be reached only through a revolution. But this revolution should be, in the opinion of Marx and his followers, different from former revolutions, which only replaced one ruling class by another. The stratified society, according to this notion, is struggle, conflict, exploitation, suppression. The classless society is peace, planned development of productive forces, freedom.

That might certainly be possible in the abstract; at least it is not unthinkable. Experience, however, seems to prove that the abolition of all classes, as in Russia, is not only the breaking of social and eco-

conomic chains but the destruction of tremendous economic values, the suppression of large groups of the population. It requires a political system of terrorism which is identical with mass-rule, and a dictatorial government which must rest on mass-emotions and mass-instincts. It is still uncertain whether and when this dictatorial regime based on force can be transformed into a free society, with free opinion and free discussion, where life again becomes productive and spontaneous. Such a concentrated system is probably not at all conducive to a loose structure with ample leeway for individuals and groups.

Looking at the future of the highly mechanized economic process and keeping in mind the ideas which gave birth to socialism, the experiences of the last years prove that mankind is involved in a very dangerous crisis which cannot be solved by the simple formula of collectivization or socialization. As no one could know twenty years ago, such a socialization is a political and technical process, the human side of which is not determined by the fact that the private entrepreneur or the power of the monopolies is reduced to insignificance. If the social stratification is dissolved in a violent process of change, the consequences analyzed in this essay are hardly avoidable.

On the other hand, the facts on which Marx based his prediction of concentration and the untenability of entrepreneurial economics have certainly come true and his general view has been confirmed. We

have witnessed the growth of monopolies, which inflict suffering on the consumers, and which because of their size and clumsiness lack versatility and flexibility. We have seen the destructive nature of competition, especially when surrounded by monopolies, and rapid technical changes to which adjustments are too painful to be expected. We have felt the lack of new fields for investment such as were offered during the nineteenth century with the building up of a new system of transportation, and in fact of life. We have met uncertainty in the monetary field, with great changes in currency systems, and finally we have encountered the political crisis, probably in itself a consequence of these economic changes. All these conditions have made it almost impossible for the single entrepreneur to cope with the situation and provide the intellectual and economic leadership which could solve the problems with which society is confronted. More than ever in history individual, independent activity is dwindling away. Society or the state must take the lead and does so even in countries in which the function of the entrepreneur seems to remain unimpaired.

The best example of this trend is the United States, where the problem of investment will impose on every regime, whatever its party affiliation, the inescapable task of constructive economic action. But this very process, in which economic and social functions change rapidly under high pressure, is a period

of transition during which ideals and concepts also change. This holds true for the entrepreneur also. The vicissitudes of present-day economics make it very unlikely that the entrepreneur is ready to accept all the risks involved in his enterprise, and he is only too glad to fall back upon a guarantee, a subsidy, some offer of security. The erection of shelters against economic avalanches has become a matter of course. The state has always tried to stave off wholesale destruction in times of catastrophe; but the remedial measures were never so universal nor so far-reaching as they are now, and the private entrepreneur could always hope, even after bankruptcy, to come out on top once more. After the experiences of the last ten years governmental institutions formerly unheard of have become firmly established, such as insurance of deposits, aid for reconstructing the financial structure, regulation of markets, legal order in the labor market, regional planning and so on.

Even more important and interesting are the changes in Great Britain, the mother country of the independent entrepreneur. There he sees himself surrounded by state and semipublic enterprises; he is driven, almost without knowing it, into a position in which his maneuvering field is very narrow. But as the decisive changes of the last eight years in Great Britain took place under a Tory government and as they were understood to be measures of expediency and not the expression of a new principle, there was

no ideological struggle. Many steps for assuring increasing output and better employment went almost unnoticed, although under other political conditions the same steps would have caused great friction. This, incidentally, is only confirmation for the old observation, which can almost be termed an historical law, that classes in periods of rapid change do not understand their own interests and must be forced into acceptance of a course which is to their own benefit. Fortunately for the British entrepreneurs the leadership was with the Conservatives, who were flexible enough (more so perhaps than the Americans) to discard old ideas without saying so, perhaps even without knowing it.

We have entered a period of great changes in social methods and objectives without adequate ideas dealing with these new phenomena. Not only have the lodestars of the prefascist period lost their splendor: the goals toward which they pointed have been changed and become meaningless. The entrepreneurs still fight against socialism and social control, against the progressive ideas of greater equality and planned economic expansion; they still aim at maintaining independent entrepreneurship and private property. In this struggle they look for the assistance of fascism, although it is bound to "liquidate" free entrepreneurship more radically and ruthlessly than would be done by any system of social control.

The workers on the other hand are still fascinated

by the idea of a classless society. They fight to break the "chains of wage slavery," and, as in the nineteenth century, they see the future as the dialectical antithesis of the class struggle. Society as it has existed in the nonfascist countries appears to them as a violent civil war, though they would admit that as a rule the "enemies" co-operate whenever orders are coming in, and that both classes, entrepreneurs and workers alike, try above all to satisfy the customers. This whole theory fails to take cognizance of the fact that fascism fights all classes, and none more fiercely than the workers, in order to establish its own domination, with the help of the masses. Nor has it been sufficiently realized that the economic system is in the stage of a transformation in which the position of the workers and entrepreneurs will not remain unchanged. This much is certainly clear, that the great majority of workers throughout the world nowadays consider fascism as the main danger and would prefer to live in a democratic system (with unemployment eliminated), which means in a system with reasonable profits.

It would certainly be easier for the entrepreneur to accept the prefascist situation, with all the sacrifices the transformation of the economic system might imply, than for the workers to renounce the idea of a classless society as an empty and dangerous concept. But the workers also will realize sooner or later that to abolish the classes or social groups altogether means the destruction of society. It can be achieved only

by fusing the whole people into an amorphous mass and establishing a regime which in the beginning unleashes all the emotional passions for destruction and later must lead to a long-lasting dictatorship, under which there can be no sphere of individual freedom.

The classless society is one of those dreams which attracts mankind because it contains the promise of an eternal peaceful status. Although it is based on a scientific analysis of economic society, it is no more than a utopia which can serve as a point of orientation, or as a regulative idea in relation to which social and economic movements and political measures can be evaluated. How can such a classless society work without deadening the vital impulses emanating from free social groups, their discussion, their action? If the eternal peaceful status means definite ideas, definite institutions, definite order under the control of a machinery which resents even improvement, then such a classless society would be the opposite of the ideal of socialism. And our experience makes it probable that this would be the case.

Does this mean that we must abandon the idea of an economic democracy, of greater equality and personal freedom? Certainly not. But it means that we must realize that we can expect to win these goals only through a process of evolution or social transformation, of changes and compromises, in which they are approached by education, economic institutions and social groups in a process of continuous

adjustments. This view, many will hold, lacks definiteness and indicates only the general direction without elaborating any details. That is true, but it is equally true of any social system which we expect to evolve in a long process. Marx's view of a classless society also lacked elaboration and, as we see now, failed to be realistic because it presented dialectic opposites and assumed that the productive social forces in society would continue to work after its destruction.

Let us not indulge in wishful thinking. Marx taught us to look for the fundamental economic tendencies. What are they in this case? The tremendous increase in productivity is the decisive fact. A hundred years ago the problem was how to fight scarcity and poverty; nowadays it is how to avail ourselves of the potential wealth which is at our doorstep.

Discussion in the last ten years has created what we might term a general opinion among economists and sociologists pointing in the direction of concerted social action as the method by which to attain this goal: not only the end, but also the means toward the end are widely accepted. There is a striking contrast, however, between these ideas and the thinking that dominates the minds of the entrepreneurs and the workers. These groups still live in the past. They do not realize that conditions have changed fundamentally; they do not realize that both the old entrepreneurial policy and the striving for a classless society

prepare the path for a political regime which destroys the sphere of free activity for workers as well as for entrepreneurs.

There are only two ways out of the impasse that modern society has reached. Either we lose ourselves in a regime in which the masses rule by being led into and kept in a state of violent emotion, or, conceiving of history as a process of social transformation by the human spirit, we build up the social and economic institutions that will allow full utilization of our opportunities. We must choose between the mass-state and society, between enslavement and liberty.

Appendix One

ON GROUP PSYCHOLOGY AND MAGICAL THINKING

It has been said that the crowd, though it lacks logical reasoning, follows that logic of magic which is characteristic of primitive people. But this comparison is not applicable; it is rooted in the hypothesis that the crowd of our day is the return of the primitive herd, while in reality it is modern man turned emotional. There is almost nothing in the psychology of the crowd which can be called magical thinking. Magical thinking also is *thinking*: it is based on the belief that there is an order in the world, an order which is not given as a process, a series of changes connected by causality, but which rests on a certain way of exist-

ence. To be in the world means to be connected with the universe: every living being, especially every human being, mirroring in its existence the whole order of the universe, a microcosm within a macrocosm. The whole sphere of life is one indivisible unity; in spite of all the differences and specific features of living beings, in spite of all special problems, the identity of life in all its forms with itself, the identity with its pure essence, is the apriority of thinking. But thinking it is and remains. It is not a blind emotional reaction to a given situation, nor is it giving way to instincts or to the subconscious. The thinking of primitive peoples is also within the framework of a fully elaborated rational system, which has its arguments and opinions and has been tested by experience. Astrology, for instance, a most important source of decisions in prescientific days, is based on a complex system of specified and very differentiated powers emitted by the stars and felt by all living beings who come under their influence. Astrology rests on the apriorism of a permanent and all-pervasive order of the whole world which determines every part of the universe. This order does not change: the subjection of the human being, for instance, to this law of the universe is based not on the fact that he is under the influence of these celestial powers, but on the fact that he also is, though on a minor scale, the universe.

The "law of causality" is not inherent in the phe-

nomena of nature, but is added in our analysis. Magical thinking connects power, if with anything, with *space*. The position in space and the relations within space are of importance; if anything has an "influence" (an inappropriate concept for that magic world) it is space. This order is the apriority of magical thinking which is, therefore, not a merely empirical dealing with experience, for it contains certain preconceptions, and consistency and order; it is not a chaos of impressions by which people react, but logic, though of a different kind. It is the logic of the prescientific age, in which the innate desire for an order of the world is reflected.

The crowd does not think in this way, it does not think or reason at all. It is as far from the reasoning of a court astrologist as from the arguments of a rational political scientist; it follows its own line of emotional action, for which reasons and ideas may be material but never motive. That a crowd in our modern times cannot be taken as the reappearance of a primitive tribe or people should be clear enough: modern thinking in terms of cause and consequence, in terms of an abstract law of nature, has penetrated our world to such a degree that wherever there is any thinking it has been influenced by modern science. There are at most some remnants of this old magical world in superstitions and taboos; but they are fragments and no one takes them for guidance in his life.

They are certainly not at the basis of mass-feeling, mass-emotions, mass-actions.

Whatever the way of the human spirit may be in dealing systematically with the world and itself, it is not the way of the crowd. The crowd lives in the moment. It visualizes a situation emotionally and is, psychologically, in a state of tension and excitement; it needs expression of its feelings and will never follow a systematic interpretation. Therefore the hypothesis of magical thinking in a crowd is also erroneous. We can but grasp and describe the phenomenon of a crowd as realistically as possible: starting from a parallel in a previous stage of human development promises no result.

Appendix Two

ON THE QUESTION OF THE "CROWD-MIND"

The question of whether crowds should be taken as agglomerations of individuals in which the emotional reactions of individuals are called into action, or whether the crowd is psychologically a phenomenon which is *sui generis*, is up to the psychologists to decide. This question, like many others, will depend on terminology. If we stretch the concept beyond its usual limits and speak of an "individual" in spite of the transformation which typically occurs in certain conditions—and in spite of the fact that this change does not alter different individuals in a different way, according to their different natures, but all of them

in the same way—then we can say that the masses consist of individuals and it is still the psychology of individuals which comes into play, however modified and uniform it may be. If, on the other hand, we stress the point that usually the same situation will influence different people in a different way so that every individual retains his own personality (take, for instance, a group confronted by the problem of crossing a river on a narrow log, or climbing a mountain on a difficult path), but that within a crowd cowardly as well as daring, thoughtful as well as rash, individuals behave identically, then we may be led to believe that the masses form a psychological phenomenon of a special order. This we must describe, although we cannot explain it, on the basis of a psychology for which the behavior of individuals is the only material for observation. In other words, we are led to accept the idea that the masses in their situation absorb the individuals and use them as material for collective action which cannot be conceived of as the action of individuals. We shall find a similar psychological phenomenon in groups which act under an emotional impulse, while with teamwork the efficiency of the individuals may be improved without their ceasing to be very different.

I can only say, therefore, that it seems to me very difficult to start from the individual in analyzing the crowd. If we should, the crowd would consist of detached individuals, the crowd-situation would select

and call into action the same part of the consciousness or subconsciousness of different individuals and make them alike. If we agree on the psychological nature of a crowd, it does not much matter whether we think of it as a mass of individuals or as a psychological entity *sui generis*. The danger of the first concept is distortion of what happens; the second must avoid a metaphysics which would leap from pure observation of facts to the hypothesis of a mystical subject which is above the individuals. We will have to avoid both dangers. But there is no greater mysticism in assuming the crowd to be a psychological phenomenon in itself than there is in the process of thinking within the individual.

Appendix Three

ON THE BEHAVIOR OF LATENT AND ACTIVE MASSES

Both latent and active masses are amorphous, but the latent or potential masses lack that experience which consolidates them into a mass that is bound to act. We may say that potential masses are indifferent, that they are, psychologically, in a state of rest; they become active when they are excited, and especially through nervous tension. The nervous tension tends toward abreaction—and that is the action of the masses. (Emotions also make for a psychological tension, which needs action as a means of abreaction.)

Nervous tension may originate in common experience of danger and distress or as the result of well-

cultivated emotions. An example of the former is the great earthquake in Japan on September 1, 1923. The excitement it caused—together with the traditional self-control in face of all losses of life and property—made some kind of social action almost inevitable: hence the violent mass-action against Koreans, who were accused of having laid the fires and poisoned the wells. Many medieval pogroms may also be explained in this way: they were outbursts of emotions, spontaneous or deliberately directed by the authorities, against minority groups.

But in many cases the nervous tension, the urge toward action, is deliberately created by a political leader who needs the crowd as a means for his purposes. He will not be able, of course, to create this state of excitement if there are no reasons whatever for any excitement, but he can succeed in using for this purpose a situation which would otherwise be passed over. The historically important cases are the so-called "revolutionary situations." A revolutionary situation arises when public opinion feels the necessity for a fundamental change which is visualized more or less distinctly, and expressed in political ideas indicating the direction in which a social transformation may take place. Although the implications and consequences of these changes may not be seen clearly by the masses, they will, in a general way, appeal to them.

This psychologically complex and unclear situa-

tion allows the formation of active masses. Usually the overthrow of a government or the establishment of a new ruling group will, in these conditions, take place under pressure from the masses, which are used as a battering-ram in shattering the walls protecting the old order. The masses are then the power by means of which new ideas and new social groups win the day. The revolution is mass-action serving definite purposes, though these purposes are not realized nor visualized by the masses. They defeat the opposition to change and smash the old order. But theirs is not the constructive work—sooner or later they are “dismissed,” and society emerges again, though with those changes which the revolution has worked.

Modern dictatorships like to compare themselves with, or call themselves, revolutions. But it would be difficult to explain the idea or the social structure which fascism meant to realize when it first developed.¹ Furthermore, the masses on which they ride into power are institutionalized, and the consequences of this difference are decisive.

¹ Mussolini himself admits this in his article on fascism in the *Enciclopedia Italiana*: when he set out in 1919 he had no doctrine in mind on which to found or with which to lead the fascist movement. His program was only, as he says, *action*. Fascism did not intend to be “a party among other parties, but a living movement in opposition to all political parties.”

Max Ascoli writes, “A clever politician [Mussolini], he knew how to ride on the crests of popular waves, yet the blind vitality of the fascist movement proved a hard match even for him.” (*Fascism for Whom?* by Max Ascoli and Arthur Feiler, New York, 1938, p. 44.)

Appendix Four

THE BEHAVIOR OF ACTIVE MASSES ACCORDING TO LE BON

The behavior of the active masses has been discussed by many sociologists. Up to now Le Bon's analysis still holds true, and many draw on him without being aware of it. One of his shortcomings, however, is the lack of a clear definition of the masses. For him any great number is masses, without regard to whether it is homogeneous or not, assembled for a definite goal or not, permanently organized or not. But his observations, if we restrict them to the active mass or crowd in the sense given above, are very useful and important. He states that the crowd—or everyone within

the crowd—feels its power because of the great numbers; the feeling of responsibility disappears; the individual, subject to contagion and exposed to suggestion, ceases to be an individual and becomes an automaton, not directed by his own will. Whether the crowd will be better or worse than the individuals within it will depend on the suggestions made to it: it may behave heroically or with the greatest meanness and barbarity.

The crowd is in an impulsive state of mind: it is subject to impulses which may be controlled by an individual but not by a crowd.¹ The crowd is very credulous: it will easily believe whatever it is told that conforms with its general feelings and fits into the situation (for instance, accusation of treason after a defeat), but it will be deaf to facts or reasons which do not please it. The crowd is susceptible to collective hallucination: apparitions which are noticed by one are seen at once by everybody (for instance, the apparition of St. George on the walls of Jerusalem).

Because of its general state of mind, which knows no doubts or uncertainty, the crowd likes to exaggerate. It may destroy institutions or cling to tradition; which line it follows depends on the circumstances. The most opposite motives move the crowd: egoism, selfishness (in the name of an idea) as well as abnegation, disinterestedness, devotion, need of equity.

¹ Although this may be true of a European crowd, it is probably not true of a crowd in the Far East.

The crowd is obsessed by ideas, which may be casual and transitory—an infatuation, for instance, with an individual or a doctrine—or fundamental, like fixed political aims or ambitions. These ideas work on the crowd only if they are offered as absolute, uncompromising and simple ideas: hence the importance of propaganda. They appear as “images.” The ideas which catch the attention of the crowd are not always consistent, but they appeal and are somewhat founded in the situation. The reasoning power of the crowd is inferior; it is not logical thinking but a repetition of impressions which determines their actions. A powerful and active imagination makes the thinking of the crowd pictorial, allegoric; frequently the religious character of such an imagination is apparent. Le Bon is of the opinion that crowds are the real power behind religious massacres, such as that of St. Bartholomew. He contends that such outbursts are not decided on by a government but originate in the souls of the masses, and that the same holds true for the deeds of dictators, like Danton and Robespierre. This generalization is certainly unwarranted: we must distinguish the process of the revolution, during which the masses may urge a massacre upon their leaders, and the period of the dictatorship itself, during which those in power resort to violence in order to maintain their power.

Appendix Five

ON LEADERSHIP IN CROWDS AND GROUPS

The crowd needs a leader. It needs him because unless there is a leader actions of the crowd cannot materialize, the masses only riot or disperse. Beyond that, any political action requires some judgment as to the situation, the measures to be taken, the goals to be aimed at. The leader of a crowd is different from the leader of a group. In the group the leaders and subleaders are selected according to the requirements of the situation. They must be able to expound the arguments in favor of the group. Another indispensable quality for them is the ability to negotiate, to handle people and make them understand and ap-

preciate a position which, in the opinion of the leader, ought to be taken. Failure or success in these respects is decisive. A third factor is will power, the will to dominate and impress people, without which neither intelligence nor any other ability will be sufficient. This ambition to dominate will induce the prospective leader to influence other members of the group to give him support; he will build up a machinery which serves his authority. It may well happen that in special circumstances one member of the group rises suddenly to leadership; but usually it is a long process and the future leaders are well known long before their ascendancy. They are accepted before they are selected and elected. That there is an election also proves that the leaders are well known before they win influence.

It is different with the crowd. There the leader is not selected; he "wirft sich zum Führer auf," as the German phrase says (he usurps leadership). He is not selected by a process of experience and trial: there is, so to speak, a sudden crystallization around him in which he acts as a catalyst. Therefore it is of the utmost importance to know how he appears and in what way he can impress the masses. There are cases of leadership in a crowd where an emotional personality discovers that he is able to give expression to his own emotions, which are a power forming and uniting the crowd. But these will be only casual leaders, meteoric appearances, arising especially dur-

ing a revolution. Only when this ability is combined with ambition and will power can it gain importance. In certain historical situations a crowd has formed itself and called forth a leader; in others the opposite has occurred—a statesman or political personality has created the crowd in order to achieve something as their leader.

In the case of an "abstract" crowd (radio or press crowd) the leader frequently discovers that he makes an appeal to the masses of which he has not been aware. The new technique accounts for the emergence of a special type of leader, hitherto unknown. As far as we know other qualities are needed for a "radio leader" than for the leader of a street crowd, but it is difficult to describe the qualities which make for efficient and successful speaking over the air. Some means of propaganda—repetition and insistence—must be used here as with a crowd on the street (see Appendix Six, "On Propaganda"). But over the radio some element of argument, of rational analysis, is advisable, though only on the surface. The argument must not be complicated or protracted, but must appeal to the average man; it can appeal to him only if it sounds familiar or if it is very easy to follow and furthers his interests. As examples in political life show, it may well be possible to build up a radio audience with a minimum of propaganda and a maximum of argument; but that does not preclude the opposite.

Socially, politically and culturally it is of the greatest importance whether crowds are only temporary gatherings of great numbers, or whether they meet repeatedly. I have already said that a revolutionary situation may bring about repeated mobilization of the crowd, which otherwise may be short-lived and tire of its own action. It is the leader who makes the crowd last over a longer period. If a speaker succeeds in carrying the crowd he is induced to use his influence and power, which he can do only by calling the masses out again very soon; that may be—unless he already heads a political party—the beginning of a party movement, in which the fluctuating masses will be organized. If the party represents only a social group, or concentrates on a program, the masses will disappear, having been only the battering-ram for certain interests or ambitions. As quickly as possible they will be dismissed. If on the other hand the masses are kept together in an organization aiming at the exclusion of any special interest and supposedly serving the interest of the whole, the result may be the emergence of a new political group which will be—if it preserves the character of a crowd—decidedly different from political parties and groups. Such a permanent mass-organization will crystallize only around a leader, and it will preserve its character as masses only if the personal leadership persists. If this personal leadership is replaced by an oligarchy or by a program, if the subleaders and perhaps also the

leaders are elected or re-elected, the original emotional appeal is obliterated.

It is this irrational permanent connection between the leader and the crowd that is indispensable for the continuation of the special crowd-situation. But it is restricted to special persons and it is founded in the person as well as in the tradition: the leader therefore cannot change at will; he is bound to the masses as the masses are to him. It is the charisma of which we spoke above—a word for a psychic ability the power of which we can describe although we know almost nothing of its nature—that accounts for the continuation and the historic role of the masses. I do not mean to say that mass-action requires a leader with charisma; but if the leader is only an emotional man, he will not carry the masses to actions which lead to a revolutionary change. The power of construction or destruction will depend on this psychic energy which is transmitted to the masses after it has been generated in the leader by the tension of the masses.

Appendix Six

ON PROPAGANDA

Masses in action are historical phenomena changing with history. The ideas which appeal to them change likewise. But the method of building up influence on the masses, and of keeping them together and active, is very similar throughout the ages: it is *propaganda*.

I said above that propaganda is the means by which mass-actions are brought about; it is also the main means by which crowds are kept together and made to last over a longer period. Therefore the successful leader must build up a machinery for propaganda. And if a political system rests on the masses, as modern dictatorships do, the first step it takes is the creation of such machinery as a state institution, which

no other state, either absolute or democratic, would ever have done.

Propaganda is a system for putting over or impressing an opinion upon the public. The border line between propaganda and persuasion by reason is flexible. There is hardly any reasoning in which elements of propaganda are totally absent. If those who argue are not totally indifferent to the result they attain, some element of volition will creep into their arguments. But in spite of this, as long as the will to find the truth is alive, the strength of the argument is decisive. Propaganda, on the other hand, uses arguments not in order to find the truth, but to attain a certain aim; it borrows arguments, so to speak, because they carry an element of will, of power. It uses arguments only if they seem likely to make an impression and influence people in a certain way, but never for their own sake. Arguments are only a cloak in which propaganda is concealed.

What the means of propaganda are is well known, and perhaps best expressed by the master of propaganda, Hitler. Recalling them to the reader's memory will at the same time give an idea of the psyche of the masses in its working. The purpose of propaganda, says Hitler in *Mein Kampf*, is not the elucidation of the intelligentsia, for whom science must provide the necessary basis for judgment. Propaganda is essentially not science; it is in itself never a purpose but always a means, and therefore must be judged

according to its contribution to the purpose it serves. The war propaganda in Germany, for instance, should have helped in the fight for the liberty and independence of the nation, for its future and its honor, thus excluding any consideration of humanity and aesthetics. He does not even mention truth—to expect that propaganda should shun distortion or lies would be preposterous.

Similarly he is frank as to the technique of propaganda: it must be "popular," which means not that the understanding of less educated people should be helped by a careful exposition of the problems involved, but that the propaganda should be adapted to the receptivity of the dumbest, without aiming at their education or enlightenment. The level of everything should be adjusted to the understanding of the "marginal intellect" within the masses. The result will be the better, he says, the smaller the scientific burden is and the more exclusively the feelings of the masses are considered. It is unnecessary and even harmful to aim at scientific thoroughness. As the receptivity of the masses is very small, their understanding very poor and their forgetfulness very great, the propaganda must be restricted to a few points which should be repeated often enough to impress even the "marginal listener." If, against this principle, the propaganda presents too many aspects, its influence will be dissipated, as the masses can neither remember the material presented nor assimilate it.

As propaganda must be very one-sided and follow a main line, he says, the more important it is to decide on psychologically efficient tactics. These must be chosen with the greatest care. Once the masses follow a direction or once the leader has chosen the direction, the propaganda may well be "subjective": nobody expects objectivity in political propaganda any more than in the advertisements of a brand of soap. The task of propaganda is not, he emphasizes again and again, to weigh the relative rights of different points of view, for that would destroy the determination to act; it must merely and exclusively stress its special right to serve its special purpose. It must attack the adversaries, because the attack will confirm conviction; only such directness and firmness will preclude doubt, which is the greatest danger in the situation. Another reason for the one-sidedness of propaganda is the feminine character of the nation: action is not determined by cool deliberation but by emotional feelings which, he says characteristically, are never complicated but simple and clear: love or hatred, right or wrong, truth or lie. Propaganda must reckon with this psychology.

Simplicity and repetition are thus the main features of efficient propaganda; with great contempt he says that propaganda does not serve the purpose of entertaining the blasé but of convincing the masses. Modern masses are unwieldy, they need time to adopt a new concept and they grasp an idea only after thou-

sandfold repetition. Whatever is said must, however it is said, with all variations express the same thing; it must always return to the same catchword, the same slogan. Only this steadfastness will guarantee success—an "astonishing, almost unbelievable success." This method of propaganda suggests the drilling of soldiers: in fact, there is a parallel between this psychological process of forming the mind of the masses and the training of an army.

In these views on propaganda Hitler reveals that concentration on the masses means the renunciation of any objective analysis; political leaders who base their power exclusively on the masses must cultivate and intensify the original mass-emotions. They deliberately build up an emotional tension which is for them the main means of pressure. By propaganda they make of the masses a lasting social phenomenon. We shall see how elaborate this system of creating and enlarging the masses has become. It is the characteristic feature of modern political life.

The behavior of the masses changes under the impact of clever and persistent propaganda: if the government has a monopoly of propaganda, it can lead the masses. It can prevent the subsidence of emotions and combat the fickleness of the crowds. In former times a regime based on crowds could not preclude the emergence of groups spreading counterpropaganda: the machinery was not efficient enough, control not complete; communication between oppo-

nents could not be discovered. But I believe that even the modern technique of propaganda and modern means of oppression as well as terror fail to explain the absence of any vigorous opposition; the explanation is rather the constant excitement upon which the movement feeds. Excitement and a state of suspense can be considered necessary for the "normal" functioning of a social order which might fall back into the habit of reasoning, of forming groups of opinion, if it were left to itself. With constant propaganda it is easier to preserve the masses, to prevent their dissolution. This is the case in Germany and Italy today; in these states propaganda and organization of the masses are pillars of the regime.

Japan, fascism in, 65 ff.

junkers, Prussian, 83, 183

labor, in capitalism, 146 ff., 159 ff., 163 ff., 170; in fascism, 112, 115 ff., 151, 212; errors of, 163 ff.; cp. *trade unions*

leadership, in communion (Bund), 32; in fascism, 89-92; in National Socialism, 184 ff.; of masses, 35, 38-41, 43, 45, 230 ff.; cp. *charisma*

Le Bon, Gustave, 36 n., 42, 63, 227 ff.

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